

St Thomas Garnet's School

28 Parkwood Road, Boscombe, Bournemouth, BH5 2BH

Inspection dates	24-26 June 2014	
Overall effectiveness	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

This is a good school

- Good, and on occasion, outstanding teaching ensures pupils make good progress and achieve well in their learning.
- The current good leadership and management have sustained the nurturing and caring environment of the school and have highlighted accurately the areas for development.
- The promotion of pupils' welfare, health and safety is good.
- Pupils say they are well cared for and that they feel safe and happy in the school. They behave well at all times.
- Parents are highly satisfied with the educational provision and care for their children.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always have access to regular enough professional development.
- Some aspects of subject leadership and communication are under developed.
- Occasionally, there are limited opportunities for pupils to discuss and ask questions about their learning.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with one day’s notice.
- The inspectors observed 19 lessons and also made short visits to lessons with a focus on teaching and pupils’ participation in lessons. They looked at pupils’ work, teachers’ planning and information about pupils’ progress. Meetings were held with senior leaders, teaching staff, pupils, parents and carers. School policies and other documentation were examined.
- The inspectors took account of the responses in nine staff questionnaires and in 30 online Parent View questionnaires, as well as through discussions with parents and carers at the school.

Inspection team

Flora Bean, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Marian Marks	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Thomas Garnet's is a non-selective, co-educational, independent, day school situated in the Boscombe area of Bournemouth.
- The school was founded in 1979 by a Catholic charitable trust. The school maintains its Catholic ethos. The school's admission policy clearly states that pupils of any, or of no, religious affiliation are welcome to apply.
- There are 87 pupils on roll aged from four to 11 years. The school also has a nursery with 40 children on roll aged three to four years, the majority of whom attend part time.
- The school aims to provide 'a broad and rich curriculum where children are challenged regardless of their ability, feel happy, safe and confident and well supported to foster respect for themselves, one another and the world we live in'.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school is governed by a board of trustees. The current headteacher was appointed in September 2013 and has operational responsibility for the school.
- The school was previously inspected in March 2009.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the good quality of teaching by:
 - providing regular professional development training for staff
 - ensuring that all pupils have opportunities in lessons to discuss and ask questions about their learning when appropriate.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - holding regular briefings to ensure clear communication at all times
 - developing further the role of subject coordinators.

Inspection judgements

Achievement of pupils

Good

- Pupils achieve well in this caring school. Well-planned teaching for different groups of pupils in a wide range of subjects ensures all pupils make good progress overall.
- Children join the school with knowledge and skills that are below or at the expected levels for their age. As a result of supportive teaching and accurate assessment, they settle quickly into lessons and make good progress from their starting points.
- In the Nursery, children make good progress in learning the link between sounds and letters (phonics) and in basic numeracy. A small number of children make rapid progress in literacy and are beginning to read. Children's learning profiles demonstrate an excellent range of topics covered and good progress made in basic skills over time.
- In the Reception class, a strong emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy skills enables children to make good and often rapid progress. By the end of Reception, having covered a wide range of topics which include focused literacy and numeracy work, all children achieve or exceed the expected learning goals and are well prepared for Year 1.
- The school's focus on literacy and numeracy continues through Key Stages 1 and 2. This ensures that pupils develop good reading, speaking and mathematical skills. Evidence in pupils' work indicates that standards in English and mathematics are in line with, and often above, national standards. High attaining pupils make consistently good, and often outstanding, progress. Pupils read and discuss regularly from a wide range of books which extends well their range of vocabulary and enhances their confidence in fluency for speaking.
- By Year 6, pupils are well prepared for transition to the schools of their choice as a result of good academic preparation and guidance. All pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils with special educational learning needs make good progress from their starting points because they are well supported by highly skilled staff.
- Pupils throughout the school have regular access to information and communication technology (ICT) lessons and make good progress in a range of ICT skills. Pupils make good, and often excellent, progress in music and art as a result of the school's emphasis and excellent provision for these subjects.

Quality of teaching

Good

- The quality of the teaching is good. On occasion, it is outstanding. Teaching provides a good range of imaginative activities and tasks which enables pupils to make good progress. Reading, writing and mathematics are a priority and are taught effectively throughout the school to ensure pupils have a sound grasp of key concepts as a basis for all their learning.
- Lessons include clear planning, usually focused questions, and tasks that are set to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. A good example of challenge was seen in a Year 2 English lesson on the use of adverbs. Pupils presented accurate and imaginative examples of adverbs from their writing to the whole class. All pupils made good progress, including lower attaining pupils working with the support of the teaching assistant.
- In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils were challenged to develop their understanding of square roots through a very well organised set of tasks at different levels. Pupils worked well together to help each other and made good progress.
- In an innovative music lesson, Year 3 pupils made outstanding progress as they created music using their knowledge and understanding of musical beat and rhythm.
- Teachers almost always have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and plan lessons accordingly; as a consequence, pupils achieve well. On rare occasions, teaching does not provide opportunities for pupils to discuss and ask questions about their learning. As a result, their

progress is good rather than outstanding.

- Since the last inspection a cohesive system of planning across the Early Years Foundation Stage has been developed to cover all the required areas of learning. Teaching is well planned to include good opportunities for the development of speaking, reading, writing and mathematical skills.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teaching provides a range of tasks to promote all skills. In a Nursery lesson, teachers sensitively supported children in making choices of learning inside or outdoors to develop their interpersonal and physical skills. The children freely interacted with each other and with the Nursery staff. In a Reception lesson, stimulated by discussion of a story, children created their own rainforest animals. As a result, they made good progress in extending their vocabulary and in developing their knowledge and understanding of rainforest habitats.
- Well organised one-to-one support in lessons from teaching staff and teaching assistants ensures that all pupils make good progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers monitor pupils' work in lessons and track their progress over time. Teachers plan work carefully on the basis of assessments so that pupils build on previous knowledge acquired. Homework is set and marked on a regular basis, providing pupils with helpful guidance on how to improve.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are considerate, polite and courteous at all times. They take responsibility for their own behaviour and demonstrate consistently positive attitudes to learning when working independently, in groups or as a whole class. There is no disruption in lessons.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, and throughout the school, all the safeguarding and welfare requirements meet statutory requirements. They comply fully with government legislation and guidance.
- Pupils demonstrate high levels of acceptance and tolerance of others within a positive and caring environment. Mutual respect is a hallmark of their behaviour, whether in lessons or outside for play. Older pupils have leadership roles within the 'red caps' scheme, where pupils on duty help to look after other pupils who may be in need of a friend. Leaders ensure that, when controversial and political issues are considered, steps have been taken to offer a balanced presentation of opposing views.
- Parents endorse their children's comments and agree that their children are well looked after and happily attend school.
- In discussion, pupils say that bullying is rare. They are aware of different forms of bullying and report that teachers deal effectively and swiftly with any concerns, should they arise.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and that they know how to remain safe, including when using computers. Pupils are well supervised at all times. The example set by staff encourages and promotes an ethos of respect and acceptance of others.
- Regular assemblies and a programme of personal, social and health education, which is woven into lessons, support pupils' personal development well. Pupils have regular opportunities to take part in musical events such as the school choir and orchestra. Extra-curricular trips and visits encourage and build pupils' increasing good levels of confidence and self-esteem.
- Pupils regularly participate in church services, where they lead singing and prayers. This contributes exceptionally well to their developing spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. They have an excellent awareness of other cultures, for example through links to a school in Cameroun and charitable organisations they support both at home and abroad.
- Pupils gain a practical understanding of British institutions and democracy through discussion and educational visits. From the Nursery onwards, all pupils have increasing opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness in preparation for the next stage of their education.

Leadership and management**Good**

- The leadership and management of the school are good. The newly appointed headteacher has demonstrated good capacity to sustain the existing high quality of provision and to develop the school further.
- The headteacher is effectively supported by the Chair and board of trustees to maintain the ethos of the school and to promote successfully pupils' educational opportunities, their personal development and good behaviour.
- The headteacher has identified the strengths in teaching and areas for development through accurate monitoring of teaching and scrutiny of pupils' work. However, the evaluation of teaching has not yet led to training opportunities for teaching staff in identified development areas.
- Since the last inspection, assessment procedures have been developed successfully to ensure that assessment carefully informs planning of lessons to meet the needs of all pupils.
- The curriculum encourages a positive learning ethos. It is well organised and ensures pupils of all ages and aptitudes are challenged and well supported. It covers the requisite areas of learning for literacy and numeracy, a good range of subjects and provides ample opportunities for academic, sporting and musical excellence. Leaders closely monitor the delivery of the curriculum and ensure teaching strategies are effective in meeting the needs of all children.
- The curriculum contributes well to pupils' academic achievement and their physical well-being, and exceptionally well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have good opportunities to develop a wide range of skills in ICT.
- Since the last inspection the Early Years Foundation Stage leaders have developed a cohesive system of planning to ensure that all the required areas of learning are covered. There is good provision for outdoor play for both the Nursery and Reception children.
- The headteacher has established highly positive relationships with parents for the benefit of pupils. Parents report that they are happy with the school's educational provision and care for their children.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements, including the safeguarding and welfare statutory requirements for the Early Years Foundation Stage. All staff have been appropriately trained in safeguarding procedures and staff are aware of their responsibilities.
- All policies have been reviewed and procedures firmly established to promote the welfare, health and safety of all pupils at all times. These comply fully with government legislation and guidance. All requisite safeguarding checks have been carried out and are recorded appropriately in the single central record. The school follows clear procedures for the safe recruitment of staff.
- Financial resources are well managed and staff are deployed effectively. The school accommodation meets all requirements, with a large play and grassed area. Arrangements for the security of the site and the safety of pupils are a priority and are carefully monitored and maintained by the health and safety team.
- The headteacher has appointed subject coordinators, but these roles are still underdeveloped. A minority of staff report in the staff questionnaires that, on occasion, there is a lack of clarity in communication between senior leaders and teaching staff. Inspectors considered this to be fair as the school does not hold regular staff meetings.

What inspection judgements mean

School	
Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate
<p>Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the <i>Non-association independent school inspection handbook</i> which is published on the Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140053.</p>	

School details

Unique reference number	113944
Inspection number	443459
DfE registration number	837/6004

This inspection was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Coeducational day school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	87
Number of part time pupils	40
Proprietor	N/A
Chair	Aidan Foy
Headteacher	Sarah Breeze
Date of previous school inspection	March 2009
Annual fees (day pupils)	£5580-£7800
Telephone number	01202 420172
Email address	enquiries@stthomasgarnets.co.uk

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