

# St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School, Stacksteads, Bacup

Huttock Lane End, Stacksteads, Bacup, Lancashire, OL13 8LD

**Inspection dates** 1–2 July 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- School leaders and governors have brought about rapid improvement to key areas of the school's work. From being an area of concern at the time of the previous inspection, pupils throughout the school are making good progress and achieving well.
- From very low starting points pupils make very good progress and standards in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 have risen and are currently just above average.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those supported by extra funding, make good progress because of the high-quality intervention and support they receive.
- The quality of teaching is good and some is outstanding. Activities are planned well. A good variety of methods is used to capture pupils' interests and make learning fun.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils have a pride in their school and everyone gets on well together. They behave well at all times. Pupils feel safe in school and are well cared for.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are highly effective in driving the school forward still further. All leaders, including governors, are committed to continuous improvement in teaching and learning and they share a strong desire to provide the best for every pupil.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of teaching does not yet result in outstanding achievement for pupils.
- The most able pupils are not always given hard enough work so that they make the best possible progress in all classes.
- Marking does not always give pupils the opportunity to follow up on the advice given to them.
- Presentation of pupils' work is not consistently good throughout the school.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in all classes and saw 11 lessons or parts of lessons. In addition, the inspector listened to pupils read and observed teaching assistants working with pupils.
- Discussions were held with pupils in lessons and their work was discussed with them.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders and middle leaders, members of the governing body, teaching and support staff, pupils and a member of the local authority.
- A telephone conversation took place with the HMI (Her Majesty's Inspector) who has been linked to the school since the last inspection.
- Pupils' work was scrutinised in writing, mathematics and a range of other subjects.
- The inspector listened to pupils read and checked reading progress records.
- A wide range of documentation was scrutinised, including national assessment data, the school's information about pupils' progress, monitoring records of the quality of teaching and the progress of pupils, and the school improvement plan. In addition, the minutes of the governing body meetings, safeguarding documentation and external reports from the local authority were considered.
- The inspector took account of 10 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke informally to a small group of parents at the start of the school day. The parent questionnaires recently distributed by the school were also taken into account.

## Inspection team

Gillian Hunter, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action, school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium funding is very high compared to the national average. The pupil premium is funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6.
- Since the previous inspection there have been changes in the leadership of the school and in the last school year a headteacher was seconded for a term. The new headteacher has been in post for almost two terms.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching further so that pupils can make the best possible progress at all times and achieve outstandingly well by making sure:
  - teaching in all classes challenges the most able pupils so they learn at a rapid rate and reach the highest levels of which they are capable
  - pupils have time to respond to the advice given through the marking of their work, so that they are able to learn from their mistakes.
  - that the good and exemplary classroom practice which already exists in the school is adopted across the school by all teachers.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the school with skills that are well below those typically expected for their age, with particular weaknesses in their literacy and numeracy skills. Skilled and experienced adults settle the children quickly and help them to develop these skills well. Outstanding teaching ensures children make good progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result, by the end of the Reception Year they have made exceptional progress and many are working at the level expected for their age.
- Progress in Years 1 and 2 is good. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics (letters and sounds) screening check has improved since the last inspection and is now above average.
- Standards by the end of Year 2 have improved since the last inspection. In 2013, the standards reached by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 were below average. Pupils' current work shows good progress and school assessments indicate an improvement in standards, which are now in line with the national average.
- There has been rapid improvement in the attainment of pupils throughout the school and by the end of Year 6. The results of national tests were below average two years ago and in 2013 standards had improved to average in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment for the present Year 6 indicates that pupils are on track to maintain, and even improve upon, these levels. The progress they make is rapid and better than expected nationally and so they are well-prepared for the next stage of education.
- Progress in reading is improving rapidly because teaching ensures reading is a priority across subjects and all years. Pupils of all ages speak enthusiastically about the books and authors they enjoy when reading at home and at school. In the words of one Year 6 pupil, 'I don't like reading, I love it!'
- The progress of the most able pupils has improved and more pupils are achieving the higher levels by the end of Year 6. This is linked to more effective teaching which ensures these pupils are set work which moves their learning on swiftly. However, this is not consistent across all year groups and pupils are not always challenged enough, and their progress slows as they are expected to do things they can already do, rather than learn something new.
- Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals make the same good progress as other pupils in the school and their attainment is above similar pupils nationally. Pupil premium funding has had a good impact on the attainment of eligible pupils. The gap in attainment between this group and other pupils has narrowed rapidly so that they achieve at least as well as other pupils in the school.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make the same good progress as other pupils in the school because of the well-focused support provided by teachers and teaching assistants in the group interventions. By the time they leave, the standards that these pupils reach are above the national average for similar pupils in reading, writing and mathematics.
- School leaders and all staff are very clearly focused on identifying pupils who are at risk of falling behind and concentrate on ensuring that all pupils make good progress. This clearly shows the school's commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching throughout the school has improved at a very good pace since the previous inspection because of the positive ways that teachers have responded to the high expectation set by senior leaders and support provided by external advisers.
- The teaching of phonics is particularly strong in the Early Years Foundation Stage and gives children an excellent start to both reading and writing.

- Training to improve teachers' subject knowledge and skills in reading, writing and mathematics, has been a main feature of improvement over the past year. Pupils benefit from the good knowledge that staff have and so make good progress in their understanding.
- In mathematics, pupils are improving their number and calculation skills. They apply these skills to solve number problems. For example, the youngest children were observed being introduced to 'estimating amounts'. The teacher planned many activities for children to guess, check and record their answers after calculating how far away they were from their guess. Activities both indoors and outdoors were all connected to this challenge and, as a result of expert support and questioning by the teaching staff, children of all abilities made very good progress.
- While work is generally suitable for the age-ranges and varying abilities of pupils, in some lessons, the most able pupils are not challenged sufficiently and consequently their progress is not quick enough.
- Assessments are used effectively to plan work and set new targets for pupils. Good questioning of pupils clarifies their level of understanding. Marking in books shows pupils clearly how to improve their work. However, pupils do not always have the opportunity or time to respond and improve their work and take their learning to the next step.
- Teachers and other adults in all classes have high expectations of the behaviour of pupils and plan lessons that are interesting for them. Teaching assistants contribute well in lessons and when working with individual pupils. They work effectively with class teachers, know the pupils' abilities well and deal sensitively with their particular needs.
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is effective. Pupils' individual needs are catered for and they experience success. The school makes sure that pupils work alongside their classmates as much as possible.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are friendly, welcoming to visitors and they talk proudly about their work and the school. They have positive attitudes to learning. Most pupils behave in a respectful way to each other and other adults, both in class and around school.
- Pupils take on a number of responsibilities around the school and are influential in improving their surroundings. For example, pupils have helped to design the school playground so that they enjoy playtimes and feel much safer in school. They act very responsibly as school councillors, playground leaders, prefects and classroom monitors. They develop social skills well through the lunchtime and after-school clubs.
- Good systems and strategies are in place to reward and improve pupils' behaviour. There are few recorded incidents of poor behaviour and there have been no exclusions in the last year. There are very few recorded incidents of discriminatory or derogatory language, and none was heard during the inspection.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe and are well cared for. Parents' views confirm this. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe including when using the internet. Pupils say that staff are approachable and listen to their concerns, which are dealt with quickly.
- The primary school sport funding is used to pay for sports coaches and play leaders to help develop the skills of both pupils and staff. Pupils can choose from a range of sporting activities to help them stay healthy and promote well-being. There are also increased opportunities for pupils to become involved in sporting competitions with other local schools.
- Pupils' attendance has increased since the last inspection to above-average levels this year. In the spring term 50% of the pupils achieved 100% attendance. There have been a number of actions that leaders have introduced including the breakfast club, 'The Walking Bus' and collecting children from their homes in the mornings. The number of pupils who are persistently absent has decreased.

## The leadership and management are good

- Key areas of achievement, including pupils' attainment, progress and attendance have improved strongly since the school was last inspected.
- The headteacher is highly ambitious and clearly focused on continuing to improve standards. She is very well supported by the skilled deputy headteacher who has provided good leadership, working closely with previous headteachers since the last inspection. The strong staff team continue to work together and are fully focused on continuing to improve.
- Since the previous inspection, all staff and governors have embraced the help from the local authority adviser and consultants, resulting in improvements in teaching and pupils' progress. The local authority has every confidence that the school's leaders can continue to manage further improvements on their own.
- The school's view of how well it is doing is accurate because it is based on detailed and regular examination of the work that it does. Targets set for teachers are closely linked to the school's planning documents and both are focused on improving standards.
- The headteacher is supported by three leaders who share leadership responsibility across the school for literacy, numeracy and special needs. They monitor literacy and numeracy by observing lessons, scrutinising the quality of pupils' work and analysing and tracking data.
- The work of middle leaders including subject leaders has improved since the last inspection. They are knowledgeable about their areas of responsibility and are well supported by senior leaders to develop their skills. They work well with other members of staff to share their expertise and this is set to be extended further, especially by providing more opportunities to share the outstanding practice that exists in the school.
- The curriculum meets pupils' needs well and is enriched by a range of after-school activities as well as visits and visitors that are carefully linked to topic themes, which helps to inspire pupils and develop their reading and writing skills.
- Leaders ensure that procedures for the appraisal of teachers are securely in place. All teachers have targets to help them improve. Leaders make sure that training and support for teachers help them to learn new skills. Although pupils' work is marked regularly they are not given enough opportunity to act on the advice given and improve their work or learn from their mistakes.
- Leaders, managers and governors work well together and create a welcoming climate for both pupils and their parents. This caters well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, with the result that all groups of pupils work and play harmoniously together.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is highly committed to St Joseph's. It has steered the school through an unsettled time and emerged stronger as a result. Governors make sure that school leaders are both supported and challenged. They have a good knowledge of teaching and school performance data because they visit regularly and are very well-informed by reports from the headteacher. They make sure pay is merited and that the performance of teachers, including that of the headteacher, is carefully checked. Budgets are managed well, for example, the pupil premium funding, which is raising standards. Governors make sure that safeguarding requirements are met.

## What inspection judgements mean

### School

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Judgement</b>	<b>Description</b>
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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	119661
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	426335

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	113
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Anthony Gallagher
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lynn Elder
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 December 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01706 873177
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