

St William's Catholic Primary School, Pilling

Garstang Road, Pilling, Preston, Lancashire, PR3 6AL

Inspection dates

2 July 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

- Pupils' progress is not consistently good in all year groups, particularly in mathematics. Too few pupils are reaching the higher levels in their work.
- Not enough teaching is good or better. Information from assessing pupils' skills and abilities is not used well enough to provide work that is at the right level for pupils' varying needs.
- The marking of pupils' work is not consistently good. Successes are not always celebrated and comments do not clearly inform pupils of how to improve.
- Senior leaders and governors do not check pupils' progress carefully enough to ensure that all groups of pupils learn quickly. The governing body insufficiently challenges the school's performance.
- The school's relationship with some parents in recent months has been difficult. As a result, the number of pupils on roll has decreased.
- Some of the targets within the school improvement plan are not as sharp as they could be to help to accelerate pupils' progress and to improve the quality of teaching.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils behave well and are proud of their school. Relationships between pupils and adults are strong. The school's work to keep pupils safe is good and pupils feel safe.
- The curriculum provides a range of additional activities, which are varied and bring enjoyment to pupils' learning.
- Opportunities for learning outdoors are good across the school.
- The school provides a good range of opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The headteacher, staff and governors are committed to the school and are making improvements after recent difficulties.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in four lessons, including one observation carried out jointly with the headteacher. The inspectors also observed an assembly and listened to pupils reading. They looked at examples of pupils' work and observed pupils at lunchtime and break times.
- The inspectors held meetings with pupils, staff, members of the governing body and two representatives from the local authority. They spoke to a parent as they brought their child to school.
- The inspectors took account of the school's own survey of parents and pupils and nine questionnaires returned by staff. There were 25 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including data on pupils' current progress across the school, the school's view of its own effectiveness and how the school checks on the quality of teaching and learning.
- The inspectors checked the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and looked at records relating to behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Emma Jackson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Vanessa MacDonald

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St William's is a very much smaller than average-sized primary school.
- There are two classes, both mixed age. One contains children of Reception age and pupils in Years 1 and 2, and the other, pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. The headteacher has a significant teaching commitment.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly above the national average.
- The proportion of children supported by the pupil premium funding is average. This is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportions of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language, is below average.
- The government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6, do not apply in this school because of the very small number of pupils.
- Since the last inspection, the number of pupils on roll has declined significantly.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better, and pupils' attainment is raised and all groups of pupils achieve as well as they can by:
 - ensuring all teachers use assessment information to identify and address weaknesses in pupils' subject knowledge, particularly in mathematics
 - ensuring the marking of pupils' work consistently celebrates pupils' successes and provides them with clear guidance on how to improve their work.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - sharpening the targets in the school improvement plan so they fully reflect school priorities and provide measurable steps to check pupils' progress
 - ensuring the school's evaluation of its own work is accurate and based on rigorous checking of how well pupils achieve
 - the governing body more rigorously challenging the school's performance.

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

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Attainment fluctuates year-on-year because of the very small numbers of pupils in each class and the different composition of each year group. Nevertheless, pupils' current work, as well as provisional test results from 2014, alongside the schools own data, show that achievement is not consistently good in all year groups and requires improvement.
- Most children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge below those typically expected for their age. However, this varies year-on-year. While they make reasonable progress, too few of them make good progress. There are not enough opportunities for staff to record and analyse their progress effectively.
- There are inconsistencies in the rate of pupils' progress in different subjects and across different year groups, particularly in mathematics. This is because the quality of teaching is inconsistent and the school is not always aware of how well all groups of pupils are doing.
- Typically, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 is broadly average. Recent assessments indicate that actions taken to improve teaching, particularly in Key Stage 2, are helping to improve pupils' progress. However, the proportion of pupils making better than expected progress is not yet high enough.
- Teachers do not always use assessment information to address the varying needs of all pupils. As a result, not enough of the most able pupils reach the higher levels of attainment.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils. Those who are eligible for support through the pupil premium funding, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, make progress that is similar to other pupils in the school. The very small numbers of pupils in this group means that comparisons in their attainment and that of other pupils would be statistically unreliable. Pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language, also make similar progress to their peers.
- Pupils' work in books shows inconsistencies in their progress. However, recent work in 'learning logs', in Key Stage 2, show a wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills and a high standard of presentation. Opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical skills in different subjects are less well developed.
- Attainment in reading fluctuates year by year. Nonetheless, most pupils read confidently and enjoy reading. Younger pupils use their knowledge of the sounds letters make to build words. They enjoy looking at a range of books and use these to support their work, for example when researching South American animals.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because the quality of teaching is not consistently good or better in all classes. There is evidence of some good teaching, but it is not enough to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress.
- The marking of pupils' work sometimes provides good guidance to pupils, which allows them to think about their work and how to improve it. However, this is not consistent and comments do not always directly link to the work the pupils have done or how well they have achieved.
- The information collected from assessments of what pupils can do is not always used well to match work to pupils' abilities. As a result, sometimes work is too hard or too easy, particularly in mathematics, where weaknesses in pupils' knowledge lead to mistakes being made.
- Some teachers use effective questioning to challenge and check pupils' understanding of their work. They use the outdoors particularly well to support and interest pupils in their learning. For example, 'Miss Muffet's crime scene', made pupils excited about their learning and they achieved well.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well in Key Stage 2 to support pupils' learning, especially those

who need extra help. Relationships are strong and staff manage pupils' behaviour well. As a result, pupils enjoy learning and are keen to take part in lessons.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite, well mannered and get along together very well. Pupils are very proud of their school and they find it very difficult to think of any improvements they would like to see. One child said, 'this is the best school in the world'.
- A strength of the school's work is the way in which pupils are valued individually and there is no discrimination. Pupils of all ages work and play well together.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good, they enjoy school and their attendance is high and punctuality is good. They move sensibly around school and work well together in lessons.
- Pupils say that there is no bullying in the school; older pupils have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying. They also say that if incidents did occur that they are confident staff would deal them with swiftly. The school's records support this.
- All pupils enjoy taking on a range of roles and responsibilities, for example as part of the school parliament or eco-council.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel very safe because teachers and other adults look after them very well. The school has good systems for keeping pupils safe, including when using computers. Recent parental surveys also confirm pupils are kept safe in school.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement are inconsistent across the school.
- Over the last year, the school has faced significant challenges because of a rapid decline in the number of pupils on roll. The headteacher and the governing body are resolute in their determination to reverse this trend and the school roll has now stabilised. However, these challenges have hampered efforts to focus fully on improving teaching and pupils' achievement. Following recent external support from the local authority, the focus is now firmly on improving teaching and learning.
- The staff work extremely well together and are a close-knit team, often taking on a number of responsibilities. Middle leaders do support each other, but they are not yet sufficiently challenging in improving the quality of teaching.
- Senior leaders, including governors, are increasingly aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and where further improvements can be made. However, the plans put in place by leaders to make improvements are not always robust enough to allow them to measure accurately how well the school is doing. Nevertheless, some recent improvements are evident, for example in the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2, as a result of leaders' effective actions.
- The school's systems to check and record pupils' achievement are not fully robust. As a result, teachers are not always able to assess accurately exactly how well pupils are doing and, therefore, to set them work that enables them to make at least good progress.
- The systems used to check on how effectively teachers promote pupils' achievement have not been used well enough by the governing body, when deciding about teachers' promotion and pay awards.
- Partnerships with parents are now improving, after a difficult time when a number of families removed their children from the school. The issues that caused this are now resolved due to leaders' actions.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well and is enriched with a wide range of activities and trips. The introduction of 'learning logs' is leading to greater enjoyment of different subjects. The outdoor area is used well to enhance the

curriculum.

- Good use is made of the primary school sports funding to allow pupils greater access to a range of sports and activities. For example, all pupils have regular access to swimming lessons. Although this is a good example of the school's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity, overall, the promotion of this aspect of the school's work requires improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is keen for the school to be the best it can be, however, recent difficulties related to the decline in the number of pupils on roll has meant that they have not been focused enough on the quality of teaching and how well pupils achieve. They are now working closely with the local authority and diocese to ensure the school moves forward and to reverse the decline in numbers on roll.
 - The governors do hold the school to account for some of its work, for example, they are fully aware of how the primary school sports and pupil premium funding are allocated and the impact they have on eligible pupils' achievement. Governors attend training and the recent audit of governors allowed them to identify individual skills. Procedures for safeguarding are secure.

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	119630
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	444169

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	20
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	M Butterworth
Headteacher	Ela Wort
Date of previous school inspection	20 May 2010
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