

St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School

Tile Barn Close, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 8LS

Inspection dates 14–15 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	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 for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils' achievement is good and attainment is above average by the time pupils leave.
- Throughout the school, pupils are well taught. The teaching of mathematics and spelling has improved significantly over the past year. Consequently, standards have risen.
- The school benefits from the strong leadership of its headteacher. She receives highly effective support from other leaders and governors. Teamwork throughout the school community is very strong.
- The school's work, including teaching quality, is monitored rigorously by staff and governors. This ensures that all have a very clear view of strengths, and weaknesses are addressed swiftly.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. As a result, pupils are very mature and thoughtful. They are very well prepared for life in a diverse community.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and behave well due to the school's very caring and supportive ethos. Relationships with staff and between pupils are very good.
- Governors are knowledgeable and supportive. They challenge the school well and fulfil their duties effectively. They monitor rigorously the impact of pupil premium funding and performance management.
- The school has an outstanding commitment to pupils' well-being. This is reflected in its excellent use of government funding for physical education and sport.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding. In particular, not all teachers give pupils enough guidance on how to move their own learning forward.
- Pupils' handwriting is not good enough. This hinders their achievement in writing.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use their mathematics skills to solve problems and carry out investigations.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons, two of which were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspection team made a number of other short visits to lessons and extra-curricular activities including those for physical education and sport. They heard a sample of pupils read and scrutinised a sample of pupils' written work.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, staff including senior staff and subject leaders, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 54 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). A small number of parents and carers were also spoken to at the start of the school day.
- Responses from the 35 staff questionnaires were analysed.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's records on current pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance. Documents relating to planning and monitoring, and safeguarding, were also examined.

Inspection team

Diane Wilkinson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Laura Dickson

Additional Inspector

Anthony Green

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Bernadette's is a larger-than-average-sized primary school. Most pupils are taught in mixed age classes.
- The proportions of pupils with special educational needs supported by school action and school action plus or a statement of special educational needs are broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides funding for children in local authority care, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils from military families, is below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, including those who speak English as an additional language, is well above the national average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The school runs a breakfast and an after school club which were inspected.
- Since the last inspection a new deputy headteacher has been appointed. There have also been a considerable number of changes in class teachers.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure teachers give pupils enough guidance as to how they can move their own learning forward.
- Raise attainment by:
 - developing pupils' handwriting skills so that pupils consistently present their work neatly
 - extending the opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in investigative work, including in a range of subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Skills on entry to Reception are below those expected for this age. Children make good progress and their attainment is average in all areas by the end of the year.
- This positive start and effective teaching of phonics throughout the school help ensure results in the Year 1 phonic screening check are consistently above average.
- Many pupils join the school after Reception, most of whom speak little or no English. Inspection evidence, taken from a range of sources, shows that pupils achieve well during their time at St Bernadette's. Attainment fell in the national tests in Years 2 and 6 in 2013. This was due to pupils joining the school with low starting points. Nevertheless, pupils in these year groups made good progress during their time at the school.
- By Year 2, attainment in reading is above average. Pupils make good progress due to their strong phonic skills.
- By Year 6, attainment is securely above average, with nearly half of pupils exceeding the levels expected in national tests. Pupils have a wide range of skills that enhance their enjoyment of reading. Their comprehension skills are particularly well developed. These enable them to use books as resources in a range of subjects.
- Good progress in writing ensures pupils write effectively in different formats, such as newspaper reports. They use very interesting vocabulary and their spelling has improved well this year. Attainment is above average and Year 6 pupils' writing is very effective. This was evident in the imagery used in their 'Sea Poems'. However, careless and untidy handwriting sometimes mars the presentation of pupils' work, and hence their overall achievement.
- Attainment in mathematics is above average by Year 6. Pupils' achievement has improved significantly this year. This is due to new strategies and resources which are helping to improve attainment.
- Their good knowledge of place value and calculation skills enables most pupils to work effectively at or above the expected level. Pupils do not always have enough opportunities to use their mathematical skills to solve problems and carry out investigations. As a result, pupils are not quite as confident in this area, and achievement, although above average, is not quite as good.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language acquire English quickly. This is due to the excellent support they receive. It ensures their progress in a range of subjects is rapid. Most reach at least the levels expected for their age in reading and writing, and in mathematics they often exceed them.
- The school's strong promotion of equality of opportunity is evident in the good achievement of the most able pupils. It also ensures that pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs make good progress and increasingly reach the levels expected for their age.
- Pupils in receipt of additional funding achieve as well as their peers and, unless they have significant learning needs, reach average attainment levels. This has been the case in both English and mathematics for the last two years, and they are on track to do the same this year.
- The school's excellent promotion of physical well-being ensures sports activities are very popular, and enables pupils to develop a wide range of skills.

The quality of teaching is good

- There has been strong monitoring and support of teaching quality by the headteacher, senior staff and subject leaders. This means that good teaching has been maintained despite a number of staff changes. The support for teachers new to the profession is especially good.
- There is a very effective consistency in some features of teaching, such as a planning format, assessment and marking procedures and pupil target setting arrangements. However, staff are very skilled at capitalising on the style or method of teaching that will benefit their pupils'

learning the best.

- During the inspection, teachers used a wide range of ways to interest the pupils. For example, in an excellent practical phonics activity, Reception children were very active. In an outstanding literacy lesson in Years 3 and 4, pupils sat enthralled. They listened to their teacher's clear explanation and use of highly stimulating resources to improve greatly their understanding of how to describe a character.
- Discussions and demonstrations are often used to good effect to help pupils understand. However, teachers do not always give pupils enough guidance as to how they can move their own learning forward. They do not always explain, for example, how asking the right questions or choosing the right resources can help pupils find the solutions they need.
- Adults check learning well throughout lessons, helping pupils who are stuck or providing extra challenges for those who learn quickly. This ensures that the lower or higher attainers fulfil their potential well.
- Learning support assistants provide effective support. Pupils who have a specific need, such as disabled pupils and those with special education needs, are taught well both in class and in specially focused work.
- The extra support for pupils who speak English as an additional language is exemplary. Staff enhance their learning considerably by teaching them the skills to do as well as their classmates.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The exceptionally strong promotion of moral and social values ensures pupils clearly understand the difference between right and wrong. Behaviour on the playground and around the school is exemplary.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and relationships between pupils and with adults are very good. Consequently, pupils want to please their teachers and strive hard to do well.
- Older pupils take on responsibility very willingly; they look after younger children at playtimes and organising their own football tournaments.
- A few pupils find it difficult to concentrate and work hard throughout a lesson or group activity. This means the teacher or assistant sometimes has to spend time managing their behaviour rather than concentrating on their learning.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good, including in the very effective breakfast club. Any incident is dealt with swiftly and successfully.
- Pupils and their parents report that bullying is rare. The behaviour of most pupils who find good behaviour difficult improves very effectively over time.
- Pupils are aware of important ways in which to keep safe, for example when using the internet.
- Excellent support for pupils' spiritual and cultural development helps foster good relationships. The school does not tolerate any form of discrimination. Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for their future in a global society of differing race, culture and religion.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's very strong drive and ambition has enabled the school to maintain its good level of overall effectiveness. Teamwork is excellent. Leaders and governors work effectively with the headteacher ensuring teaching quality continues to improve, and pupils' attainment continues to rise.
- Effective systems for monitoring pupils' progress and teacher quality ensure staff and governors respond very quickly when progress slows. They effectively put in place specific strategies to address this. The school is well placed to improve further.
- Senior leaders and governors manage and monitor teachers' performance well. Statutory performance management targets are very well focused on school improvement areas and individual teachers' professional development. Newly qualified staff and subject leaders are

supported especially well. This has had a positive impact on improving attainment in mathematics.

- The well-designed curriculum helps pupils develop effective skills and knowledge through interesting topics and activities. The school's excellent track record for promoting pupils' well-being through physical activity and sport is evident in their considerable sporting success. It plays a leading role in encouraging competitive sport in local schools. Outstanding use is made of recent government funding to widen the range of sports on offer and increase teaching expertise.
- The school works exceptionally well with a range of agencies. For example, with services for pupils who speak English as an additional language and the Catholic Teaching Schools Alliance. This benefits staff expertise and pupil progress especially well.
- Although a local authority 'light touch school', staff and governors benefit from its services. For example, it has helped in the moderation of the school's work, as well as training and support in a range of aspects such as subject leadership.
- Engagement with parents is very positive and they receive good information to help support their children's learning. Parents think highly of the school and are very supportive of its work.
- Safeguarding fully meets requirements. Staff and governors are well trained. Policies and procedures are rigorously applied.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Excellent relationships with staff and strong teamwork help the governing body to fulfil its duties well. Staff value the challenges governors set and the support they offer. Governors are well informed, especially about pupils' progress and the national information provided. They are very thorough in their monitoring of the impact of special funding, such as pupil premium and sports funding. Governors' regular visits to school and close check on teacher performance considerably enhance their ability to monitor and support performance management. They fully understand the links between pupil progress and teachers' progression up the pay scales. Governors are committed to training and increasing their expertise in order, for example, to support pupils from minority ethnic groups further.

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	116391
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	443881

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	325
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Judith Moore
Headteacher	Jo Riglar
Date of previous school inspection	11–12 July 2011
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