

St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School

Matlock Road, Belper, DE56 2JD

Inspection dates

14–15 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Staff know each pupil exceedingly well. The high levels of care, guidance and academic and personal support offered to pupils lie at the heart of the school's success.
- Children in the Reception class quickly develop a love of learning. They make rapid progress in acquiring knowledge and skills in all areas of learning, especially in literacy and numeracy. This is due to the outstanding provision.
- Pupils make outstanding progress between Year 1 and Year 6. Pupils' progress in reading and mathematics is exceptional.
- Pupils attain standards that are consistently above-average by the end of Year 6. Consequently, they are well-prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Teaching is typically outstanding. Teachers make learning challenging for pupils of all abilities, through providing creative and stimulating activities.
- Staff check closely if pupils are on track to reach their targets; additional support is quickly put in place for any pupil who is falling behind.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school and during lessons is exemplary. Pupils are courteous and polite and show respect for adults and each other.
- Governors are highly committed to ensuring that pupils receive a first-class education. They have an accurate picture of the school's performance and know what they have to do to secure further improvements.
- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. He is passionate that every pupil will achieve well irrespective of his or her background or circumstances.
- Leaders of subjects provide excellent support and advice to teachers on how to improve their practice.
- The curriculum is well planned and promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well.
- The school makes excellent use of the primary sports funding to enable pupils to participate in sport and develop healthy lifestyles.
- Pupils make excellent progress in writing in regard to grammar, punctuation and spelling; leaders are aware that boys' progress in improving the quality of the content of their writing, however, is less strong.
- Pupils' attendance has improved markedly this academic year. However, governors and senior leaders are aware that this is not as high as they expect. Clear plans are in place to ensure that attendance continues to improve.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 13 lessons taught by seven teachers.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' current and previous workbooks across a range of subjects.
- Inspectors heard a group of pupils from Years 2 and 6 read.
- Meetings were held with: the headteacher, other senior leaders and leaders of different subjects; a group of pupils from Key Stages 1 and 2; a representative from the local authority; and members of the governing body.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation including: the school's own self-evaluation and plans for improvement; the school's evaluations of the quality of teaching and learning; school policies; the school's most recent data on the attainment and progress of pupils; information provided to families; information relating to the safeguarding of pupils; and the school's most recent data relating to the attendance and punctuality of pupils.
- The lead inspector considered the range and quality of information provided on the school website.
- Consideration was given to the 31 responses from parents and carers to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as the school's own analysis from its own surveys. The inspector spoke informally with parents at the beginning of the school day. Consideration was given to the 12 questionnaires completed by members of staff.
- The inspection was carried out following a complaint made to Ofsted which raised serious concerns. Her Majesty's Chief Inspector decided that an inspection of the school should take place to follow up the whole-school issues that were raised. Inspectors sought to establish whether the systems for handling concerns about child protection were robust throughout the school and that people in positions of trust are able to carry out their roles effectively. It was found that safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements and that staff are suitably trained in child protection and are able to seek advice and support when required. Governors and senior leader are effective in monitoring and evaluating policy and practice of safeguarding within the school.

Inspection team

David Carter, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Diane Clapcott

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in seven classes. There is one class per year group. All Early Years Foundation Stage children attend on a full time basis.
- Most pupils come from White British backgrounds. There are very few pupils from other heritage groups or who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs (6%) is below the national average. The proportion supported through school action (14%) is above the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for pupil premium funding (11%) is below that which is found nationally. This is additional funding provided to give extra support to those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after.
- The proportion of girls who attend the school is lower than that which is found nationally.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the attainment and progress of pupils by the end of Year 6.
- There is a separate before- and after-school club which is held on the school site. This was not included as part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Sustain the focus on improving pupils' attendance, building on strategies which have proved successful in recent times.
- Accelerate the progress of boys in improving the content of their writing, so that they attain similar standards as in reading, mathematics, grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher is passionate and driven by a moral purpose that all pupils, irrespective of background or circumstance, achieve well during their time in this school. In particular, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, disadvantaged pupils and others whose circumstances make them vulnerable are provided with high levels of support to enable them to achieve as well as their classmates both academically and personally.
- The headteacher's vision that all adults must continuously model the behaviours which they would wish to see in the children has been achieved. All members of staff are fully supportive of the headteacher and have the highest expectations of themselves and pupils. Relationships between adults and pupils are strong. This creates a culture which allows highly effective teaching and learning to take place.
- Senior leaders know each pupil exceptionally well because they make and keep regular and accurate checks on their progress and development. When pupils leave the Early Years Foundation Stage, targets are set for the end of Year 6 for each pupil in reading, writing, mathematics, science and religious education. Where pupils are identified as not being on track to achieve their target, support programmes are immediately put in place to help them catch up quickly. Where a pupil is doing well, targets are amended accordingly. This exemplifies the school's approach to doing the best they can for each pupil so they can fulfil their academic potential.
- Checks on teaching by leaders of English and mathematics have enabled them to have a crystal clear view about strengths in their subjects and what needs to be done next to improve. Improvements which have been made to the teaching of writing have helped standards to rise at the end of Key Stage 2, especially in grammar, punctuation and spelling. Adjustments to how teachers promote pupils' skills in calculations have helped standards in mathematics to remain high at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. This shows that senior leaders have the capacity to drive further improvements in the school.
- Teachers say that, following rigorous checks on the quality of their work, they are given excellent support to help them to improve. Staff are motivated to strive for excellence in all aspects of their work.
- Senior leaders have devised a new curriculum for pupils which is organised around half-termly or termly topics. The headteacher is committed to ensuring that pupils are able to learn from as many first-hand experiences as is possible. Consequently, the majority of topics are based around local studies. This helps to engage pupils in their learning. Teachers undertake regular assessments to check pupils' progress in a range of subjects. This helps them to plan next term's work to meet the needs of all pupils of different abilities.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well. Pupils achieve well in the arts because they have many opportunities to be creative in design, dance and music. For instance, all pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 learn how to play a brass instrument as part of the school band. Pupils have a very good understanding of a range of faiths and cultures different to their own and they are taught about the importance of respecting people from different backgrounds. Consequently, pupils are developing knowledge and skills which are making them well-prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The leader responsible for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs maintains a close eye on the progress which individual pupils make. Highly effective support programmes are put in place which helps pupils to achieve well. Where required, the school engages well with other agencies that provide support to pupils and families. There are striking examples of where the school has worked with other agencies to support vulnerable pupils to help them to improve their behaviour, attendance and academic progress.
- Senior leaders promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination well. The achievement of different groups of pupils is checked regularly and where required, the school puts in place a range of support activities to try and ensure that gaps in attainment between different groups is narrowed. As a result, pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding make at least similar and often better

rates of progress than others in the school.

- The school is making highly effective use of the new primary school sports funding. The use of external coaches is helping staff to develop their knowledge of how to teach physical education more effectively. Also, pupils have many opportunities in which to participate in a wide range of sports as well as to compete against other schools locally. Pupils' progress in developing their skills in physical education and sport are tracked and pupils are given their own personal targets in physical education. Gifted and talented pupils in sport are challenged by competing against similar pupils from other schools. Pupils who need additional support are given opportunities at lunchtimes to take part in a wide range of sporting activities. Pupils confirm that they enjoy taking part in sport and physical education activities and recognise the contribution it makes to developing a healthy lifestyle.
- Parents and carers value the quality of education that this popular and over-subscribed school provides for their children. Parents are kept informed about the life of the school through newsletters and the website, which is in the process of being revamped. This is to make it easier for parents to navigate to the most important and essential information.
- The local authority has provided effective support to the school since the last inspection. This has helped the school to improve continually. The local authority has full confidence in the school's leadership and adopts a light-touch approach in providing additional support.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is effective. Governors are highly committed to ensuring that the school provides a first-rate education so that pupils can achieve well academically and personally. They are adamant that pupils need to be well-prepared for the next stage in their education as well as to take their place in modern society.
 - Governors are acutely aware of the school's performance including the achievement of different groups of pupils. They know what the school needs to do next to improve pupils' achievement even further. They manage the school budget well and ensure that funds are used well to support disadvantaged pupils as well as improve the quality of provision for sport and physical education.
 - Governors have well-established procedures for managing the performance of staff. Governors draw upon a wide range of information to ensure that decisions about teachers' pay and promotion are based on the quality of practice and the extent to which this is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement.
 - Governors have put in place robust systems to ensure that the school meets safeguarding requirements. The detail of policy and procedure in the 'pink' safeguarding booklet is known by all members of staff. All staff have received appropriate training in safeguarding and the importance of pupil safety has the highest of profiles within the school. As a result, parents have the fullest confidence in the school to keep their children safe; pupils say that they trust adults and that they feel safe and enjoy coming to school.
 - Governors are committed to continuous improvement. They are part-way through a project which is securing improvements to the quality of the outdoor environment in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is already helping to promote children's physical development.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. From the minute children start in the Reception class, they develop excellent attitudes to learning. Pupils are: keen to learn; punctual to lessons; able to move around the classrooms calmly; and are ready to begin work immediately. No time is wasted during lessons because pupils follow teachers' instructions straight away.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school is exemplary. Pupils are polite and courteous to each other and to members of staff. Pupils play well together at break-time and they follow the school's rules.
- Pupils are very supportive of each other. As one pupil said, 'Right from early on in Reception we are

taught to respect everybody else regardless of the colour of their skin, where they come from, or how clever they are. At St Elizabeth's everybody just gets on with one another.' This is indicative of the extent to which pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural is effectively promoted.

- Attendance has fluctuated over the last three years. Governors and senior leaders have highlighted the importance of good attendance with pupils and families. This is beginning to secure improvements and pupils' attendance has improved markedly this year with current rates being above average.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils and parents are unequivocal that the well-being and safety of pupils is the priority at this school. Pupils feel safe because of the high levels of care, guidance and support provided by all adults. This is confirmed by a parent who commented, 'This is a lovely, small, family-orientated school, where all children are valued. The staff are brilliant.'
- Pupils, staff and parents consider that bullying is not an issue at the school. Pupils say that very occasionally there is some name-calling; however, this is stamped out straight away. Pupils say that adults look after them exceedingly well.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. Pupils are aware of the potential risks of using the internet and know what to do if they come across something untoward.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching is typically outstanding throughout the school. Teachers have high expectations of all pupils in relation to their behaviour and learning. The highly effective staff team work well together and they are focused on ensuring that pupils make the best possible progress from their starting points.
- Teachers draw on their high levels of subject knowledge to present learning in interesting ways for pupils. Highly effective use of resources, including the use of computers, captures pupils' interest at the start of lessons. Pupils are motivated to undertake their learning tasks, which often encourage them to be creative in their responses. Pupils are able to sustain their concentration for long periods. This enables them to produce extended pieces of work in a range of subjects which are of high quality.
- Teachers work effectively with skilled teaching assistants to check on pupils' learning during lessons. Where pupils are finding the learning difficult, they are given immediate support. Conversely, where pupils are finding the learning easy, they are quickly moved on to undertake more challenging work.
- Teachers' marking is detailed and pupils are aware of how well they have done and what they have to do next in order to reach their targets. Teachers' checks on pupils' work informs what is covered in subsequent lessons. This ensures that pupils of all abilities, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and the most-able, are provided with challenging work which helps to make rapid rates of progress.
- The teaching of mathematics is highly effective. Pupils benefit from being provided with daily activities which help to develop their skills in mental calculations and their understanding of the values of numbers. This gives children confidence to apply their skills in solving problems and undertaking mathematical investigations. Consequently, standards in mathematics are consistently high and are still rising.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is highly effective. Pupils quickly acquire skills which enable them to become confident readers and develop an enjoyment of reading. Year 6 pupils say that they enjoy reading for pleasure as well as for gathering information which helps them in their work in a wide range of subjects.
- The teaching of writing, especially of grammar, punctuation and spelling, has improved markedly after school leaders recognised two years ago that this was a relatively weaker area of the school's provision. Pupils are given daily practice in developing their skills in these areas, which is helping to develop their

technical skills in writing to a high level.

- Pupils enjoy learning at home so they can show their parents how well they are doing. Pupils have regular homework in reading, spelling and mathematics. Homework is effective in consolidating pupils' knowledge and developing their skills in a range of subjects. This is making a positive contribution towards pupils' achievement.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Pupils make rapid progress during their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage and this is built on effectively as pupils move through Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils make outstanding progress across Key Stage 1. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are consistently high overall and in mathematics.
- Since the previous inspection, pupils have consistently made outstanding progress across Key Stage 2. By the time they leave the school, attainment is consistently high in mathematics and reading. Standards of attainment in writing have improved over the last three years. As a result, standards have risen from being above-average to high.
- Pupils' knowledge and skills in phonics are quickly developed. The proportion of pupils who do well in the national screening check at the end of Year 1 has increased and is now well above that which is found nationally. Pupils read widely, often developing their skills in decoding texts as well as understanding their meaning. This helps them to make outstanding progress as they move through the school.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make at least good progress, and for the majority, outstanding progress from their starting points. Pupils are supported highly effectively to work towards achieving their short-term targets. Over time, this focused support enables them to make similar rates of progress to their classmates.
- In 2013 there were too few disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 to comment on their attainment and progress without risk of identifying them. Funding is used extremely well to support individual pupils.
- The most able pupils are provided with significant levels of challenge. As a result, the proportion of pupils attaining Level 3 at the end of Key Stage 1 and those attaining Level 5 by the end of Key Stage 2 are consistently above average. The proportion of pupils attaining Level 6 in mathematics is well above national averages in 2013 and 2014 at the end of Year 6. This is indicative of the outstanding progress which the most able pupils make from their starting points.
- Girls and boys tend to make similar rates of progress from where they start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Girls' attainment is consistently above their peers nationally at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Boys' attainment is also above average overall; however, it is average in terms of the quality of the content of their writing when compared to all boys nationally. Although this still represents at least good progress from their starting points, senior leaders are aware of the need to accelerate boys' progress in this aspect. This is to match boys' high levels of attainment in the technical aspects of writing, such as grammar, punctuation and spelling as well as that in reading and mathematics.
- The very few pupils who come from ethnic minority groups, or who do not speak English as their first language, do equally as well as their classmates.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- About half of the children who enter the Early Years Foundation Stage do not live within close proximity of the school and attend various pre-school settings. As a result, the Early Years Foundation Stage leader commits an appropriate amount of time to acquiring a lot of information about each child before he or she starts school. This is because she visits children either at home or in the numerous pre-school settings. This helps her to plan interesting activities right from the start which capture children's interest. Children settle quickly into the daily routines and acquire a love of learning.

- On entry to the school, children's skills and knowledge vary each year. However, these are usually below those typical for their age, for the large majority of children. This is especially the case in children's skills in communication, language and literacy. Due to outstanding teaching, children make rapid progress during their first year in school, especially in literacy and numeracy. Consequently, children of all abilities do exceptionally well and are well prepared for entry into Year 1.
- The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. Adults check closely on how well children are doing and record their observations in great detail. This information is then used by the leader to plan subsequent activities which move them on quickly in their learning. There is a continuous commitment to ensuring that children have the best possible start to school. As a result, the achievement of children is outstanding.
- The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage has established strong relationships with parents and carers. The use of the learning journals is effective as it helps parents and staff keep a log of children's achievements in all areas of learning, both at home and school. Regular meetings and continuous informal dialogue ensure that parents are fully involved in supporting their child's development.
- Children behave exceptionally well. They are encouraged to play and learn together and they respond quickly to the instructions given by adults. Children are polite and well-mannered. Adults ensure that children are safe and that they feel safe in the welcoming and attractive environment.
- School leaders are in the process of improving the outdoor learning environment. The initial work has increased the size of the outdoor area. This is helping to promote children's physical development well.

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	112907
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	449401

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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	213
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Barbara Wareing
Headteacher	Bryan Lowe
Date of previous school inspection	12 February 2009
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