

# St Luke's Catholic Primary School

Church Road, Trench, Telford, TF2 7HG

**Inspection dates** 2–3 October 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- In a short time, the acting headteacher has built a strong team with a united approach to improving the school. Together, they have tackled any weaknesses effectively.
- Strong and highly focused leadership has made sure that there has been a good improvement in the quality of teaching.
- Good teaching enables pupils to achieve well and attain standards that are now above average.
- Rigorous checking on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress, and prompt attention paid to emerging weaknesses, ensure a good quality of education is provided.
- Pupils behave well in and around school. They find lessons interesting and they enjoy learning.
- Pupils are safe in school. They feel safe and are able to recognise any potential risks.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and supports pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes to school and to each other.
- The new curriculum enables pupils to develop good learning skills, use them to extend their knowledge well and to see a purpose in what they are doing.
- Governors support the acting headteacher very well. They have good levels of involvement with the school. They challenge senior leaders effectively in order to provide a good quality of education for all pupils.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers sometimes provide too much support to pupils who are capable of working on their own.
- The high-quality marking seen in pupils' literacy books is not yet seen in other subjects or across the whole school.
- Pupils do not have good enough problem-solving skills in mathematics.

### Information about this inspection

- In view of the high number of teachers new to the school, the new acting leadership, and pupils being taught in mixed-age classes throughout the school, the inspector observed all classes to check on how teachers ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils. All observations were carried out jointly with the acting headteacher to assess her ability to check on the impact of teaching on learning.
- The inspector heard pupils read and looked at the work in pupils' books.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school's own judgements on its strengths and weaknesses, and the data it collects on pupils' progress. Documents detailing the school's arrangements for safeguarding were reviewed.
- Meetings were held with governors, senior leaders and pupils. A meeting was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Questionnaire responses from eight members of staff were analysed.
- There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) for them to be published. The inspector looked at the results of the school's recent questionnaires, giving parents' views.

### Inspection team

David Speakman, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes throughout the school. There are classes for Reception and Year 1; Years 1 and 2; Years 2 and 3; Years 4 and 5; and Years 5 and 6.
- The large majority of pupils are White British. A broadly average proportion speaks English as an additional language.
- A below-average proportion of pupils are disadvantaged and eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or in the care of the local authority).
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- There has been a high level of staff turnover since the previous inspection. The headteacher is currently out of school and there is an acting headteacher. All but two teachers have joined the school since it was last inspected.
- An independent out-of-school club is held in school. It is not run by the governing body and is subject to separate inspection.

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

- Further improve teaching by:
  - extending the high-quality marking seen in literacy books into other subjects and across the school
  - ensuring that teachers encourage pupils to move on to more demanding work unaided as soon as they are ready for it.
- Give pupils more opportunities to use and develop their problem-solving skills in mathematics.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- Staff are exceptionally well led by the acting headteacher and work as an effective team. She has worked very effectively on team building, supported by the senior leadership team and governing body. This has had a significant impact on improving the quality of education provided and, in turn, pupils' achievement. Current leadership is clearly demonstrating the capacity to improve the school.
- Checks on the quality of teaching and learning are effective. Regular observations take place and teachers are required to account for the progress of their pupils in regular meetings. As a result, teaching is now good and there is evidence of some outstanding teaching. Leaders set rigorous targets for the work of all adults in the school. These have been effective in improving teachers' work. Similar robust checks are made on pupils' progress. While the school still uses National Curriculum levels to closely monitor progress, they are well on the way to developing new assessment procedures to check progress through the new curriculum.
- Leadership has improved the school's development planning; school self-evaluation draws on a wide range of carefully considered evidence to give accurate evaluations of the school's performance. Planning for improvement is now more detailed and clear in its targets. Timescales and milestones now enable individually identified leaders to monitor the pace of improvement accurately.
- There have been some recent changes in adults responsible for some areas of leadership. The acting headteacher and governors have made sure that those taking over are well prepared and experienced to step into their roles.
- The curriculum is planned carefully to engage pupils' interest and attention. There is an appropriate emphasis on developing literacy skills and mathematics from the very earliest age. Good links between subjects ensure that learning is made relevant and meaningful for the pupils. This aspect of the curriculum is a key factor in forming pupils' positive attitudes to learning. There is a good level of attention paid to creative aspects of the school's work. Good art and craft work is displayed and the school provides well for pupils' music and drama experiences in the form of pupils playing musical instruments and taking part in theatre productions.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Through responsibilities, pupils' social understanding is developed well. Good social and moral development is shown by the way pupils of different ages and backgrounds get on well and by their good behaviour. They develop a sense of fairness and appreciate achievement through taking part in a wide range of out-of-school activities. The school actively celebrates a range of cultures, encouraging a healthy respect among pupils from different backgrounds. Pupils learn about social and democratic processes through the election of a school council, during which candidates are required to justify their standing as candidate. Pupils discuss current affairs in class, such as the recent referendum on Scottish independence.
- Since the poor performance of pupil premium funded pupils in 2013, governors and senior leaders have made a concerted effort to improve the progress of these pupils and to close attainment gaps. An in-depth analysis of the school's actions was completed and plans made and implemented to close the gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. An additional teacher was appointed part time, teaching assistants and teachers delivered support programmes and extra resources were purchased. Pupils' outcomes were carefully monitored by the special educational needs coordinator. Equality issues were addressed by funding trips and visits for those pupils whose families might find difficulty in financing these activities. As a result, attainment gaps closed.
- The school has made effective arrangements for spending the primary sports funding to improve and widen sporting opportunities on offer. The funding is directed to improving equipment for pupils to take part in a wider range of sports activities, including after-school clubs. It is also used to improve teachers' expertise through training. The school is already monitoring the impact of this spending and can demonstrate its success.
- The support provided by the local authority has been an important factor in guiding the school towards

improvement. The local authority has supported the acting headteacher through a challenging year and has worked effectively with the governing body to improve their performance. They have put the school in touch with the headteacher of a local recently improved and effective school to offer support. They have made half-termly monitoring visits and provided clear feedback. The school and the governing body have acted conscientiously on the advice given, and this has helped the school improve at a rapid pace.

#### ■ The governance of the school:

- Members of the governing body have worked effectively to improve the impact of their work in the school. They conducted a review of their performance and acted decisively on the outcomes.
- Governors now systematically challenge senior leaders over the effectiveness of the school. They are knowledgeable and ask searching questions to hold staff accountable. They support school leaders fully in dealing with important issues, including weaknesses identified in teaching.
- Governors visit school regularly to see for themselves how well it is doing. They have a good knowledge of how well teachers are doing their jobs through first-hand experiences and through discussions with senior staff.
- Through training, governors develop their own skills well in order to support and strengthen leadership and management. They are fully aware of how the achievement of pupils compares with other schools.
- Governors set clear targets in managing the performance of the headteacher and staff, making sure that teachers' pay increases link to competence.
- The governing body ensures that all statutory requirements are met, including those for safeguarding.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Most parents who responded to the school's questionnaire and all staff say that behaviour is good.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes and approach their learning with enthusiasm. They take care over their work, and books are presented in a neat and tidy manner. Very little work is unfinished and there is evidence that pupils respond to teachers' marking by completing tasks to correct mistakes. Pupils speak positively about behaviour. They say lessons are rarely interrupted by poor behaviour.
- Pupils are proud of their school and speak highly of it. They respect the buildings and grounds, which are free of any damage, graffiti or litter. Pupils show exceptional manners and courtesy to each other and to adults.
- Behaviour at break times and on other occasions out of the classrooms is good. Pupils play alongside each other harmoniously. Pupils say that the 'playground buddy' scheme did not really take off and they need to reconsider the training of pupils for this responsibility.
- Pupils enjoy school. They say, 'Lessons are fun.' They like school because they are expected to work hard and do their best. They feel they are making good progress. However, lesson observations have shown that pupils are sometimes not showing initiative in moving on to more challenging work when they are ready, in some cases because they are not encouraged to by teachers. Attendance is average year on year, and pupils come to school on time.

#### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in and out of school. They are confident that any issues that worry them would be dealt with promptly and effectively. They are helped to develop good understanding of internet safety, including how to deal with any instances of potential danger.
- Pupils are aware of the different forms bullying can take and know what to do if they ever need help. They say bullying is not a worry for them and there is no threatening behaviour in school. They are confident that should bullying ever happen, it would be taken seriously and dealt with effectively. Pupils are well supervised.

- Staff training in respect of child protection is up to date and adults are vigilant. When necessary, staff make appropriate referrals to outside agencies, or seek their help, if they are worried about the safety of any child.

### **The quality of teaching** is good

- Leaders have worked successfully to overcome any weaknesses in teaching. Diligent and rigorous application of robust systems to check the quality of teaching and learning by the acting headteacher, with the full support of the governing body, has resulted in improved teaching. As a result, teaching is good and has had a great impact on pupils' progress.
- Teachers plan very well to ensure that all pupils in the mixed-age classes are given the maximum opportunity to make good progress. Teachers are fully aware of each pupil's capability and their previous learning. They use this diligently in planning activities that give pupils, at all levels, equality of opportunity to progress well.
- Teaching is lively and engages pupils' interest and enthusiasm because there are very strong links between subjects. In Year 2 literacy, pupils keenly wrote about their plans to care for their pet 'gruffalo', based on their class reading book. They had designed and made model gruffalos and there were strong links with reading. Pupils in Year 6 learned about scaling recipes, carefully calculating ingredients to make 24 cookies, given a recipe for six. They then completed the task by baking the cookies ready for their Macmillan charity coffee morning. Pupils have a great enthusiasm for writing and for calculation because tasks have a purpose.
- Teaching assistants have a significant impact in supporting pupils' good progress. They are skilled in the support they give and they work effectively with children. They support disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs well so that they make the same good progress as other pupils. Some teaching assistants are especially skilled in a range of support to support reading. They are able to communicate with pupils new to the school who have little English, as there are foreign language speakers.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are particularly good at using questioning and discussion to extend pupils' learning for all ages and at all levels of attainment. They ask probing questions that make pupils think carefully and come up with the answers to their own questions for themselves. There are occasions, however, when teachers do not recognise when pupils are ready to move on to the next steps of learning on their own and they provide them with too much support.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly. Teachers point out what pupils have done well and identify key points for improvement. Pupils find this helpful. There is some particularly effective marking in pupils' literacy books. However, the same high quality is not seen in other subjects or consistently across the school.
- Teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to develop and use their problem-solving skills in mathematics.

### **The achievement of pupils** is good

- Since the school was last inspected, pupils' achievement has improved and standards have risen. This is due to improved teaching, detailed checking on each pupil's progress and the provision of timely support to any pupils at risk of underachieving.
- In 2013, pupils achieved exceptionally well at Key Stage 1. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 rose sharply and was above the national average. The school's detailed checks on pupils' progress show that pupils at Key Stage 1 continued to achieve well; attainment remains above average in reading and writing. It is average in mathematics.

- Latest test results at the end of Key Stage 2 show achievement is good and attainment is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Improvement took a little longer to achieve due to previous underachievement and lower attainment. Although progress over the key stage was adequate for the 2013 cohort, it accelerated and, throughout the next school year, it was good.
- Writing shows pupils' good progress. Even from a young age, pupils produce good-quality extended writing and, as they move through the year groups, they build steadily on what they have learnt before. Writing in other subjects, such as the work on topics, is of the same good standards seen in literacy books.
- Pupils make good progress in reading. The results of the Year 1 screening check in phonics (letters and the sounds they make) show positive outcomes for all groups of pupils. Pupils who did not reach the required standard in Year 1 and who are now in Year 2 have made at least good and, in some cases, excellent progress. They now have a good knowledge of letter sounds and are confident to try to read new and difficult words by themselves. A group of these pupils quickly read 'trespassers will be prosecuted' when reading different signs in a guided reading session.
- Pupils have good number skills and work quickly and accurately working out calculations, both mentally and using a variety of different written methods. They know a lot about shapes and work competently constructing and interpreting graphs. Their problem-solving skills are not as good as other aspects of their work in mathematics. They either leave a problem incomplete or find difficulty in applying their knowledge and understanding of number in new, different problem situations.
- All groups of pupils in each year group now make at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This level of progress is seen in pupils' workbooks, in the school's checks on pupils' progress and in lesson observations.
- The most-able pupils make good progress. In 2013, the proportion achieving the higher levels was below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics and in grammar, punctuation and spelling. The latest test results show much higher proportions of pupils achieving the higher levels, particularly in reading, writing, and grammar, punctuation and spelling. In mathematics, the proportion is average. Currently, a good number of pupils have been identified as being potentially able to reach the very highest Level 6 and are receiving appropriate support.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics through effective and targeted support. Most make at least expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and some more.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language achieve well. Through effective and accurately targeted support, they quickly learn enough English to access fully, the curriculum and make good progress. Pupils who speak English as an additional language can often be found working on the highest levels in a class.
- In 2013, pupils supported through the pupil premium funding did not progress as well as other groups. They were between one and two years behind other pupils in the school in reading, writing and mathematics. They were also between one and two years behind all pupils nationally. School leaders, including the governors, acted decisively. Through a thorough analysis of need and highly targeted support, in 2014, these pupils made better progress than others and effectively closed the attainment gap. School tracking information shows disadvantaged pupils in other year groups are making faster progress than other pupils. All disadvantaged pupils in Year 1 achieved the required standard in their phonics check.

### The early years provision

is good

- Children start in Reception with skills and knowledge lower than are typical for their age. Children achieve well and, by the time they move into Year 1, their attainment is average. Most attain the Early Learning Goals across all areas of learning, with particular strength in their physical development and speaking

skills.

- Leadership of the early years provision is good. Since the school was previously inspected, there has been much improvement, with particularly good progress in developing both indoor and outside learning environments. There is a strong emphasis on learning through discovery and exploration, with both the indoor and outside areas providing a wide range of quality resources to support good learning across the curriculum.
- During times when children choose their own activities, adults interact with them to good effect. They talk with children a lot and, through focused questioning, they effectively extend children's learning; for example, by asking searching questions and encouraging curiosity. As a result, children's speech develops well and they become confident in talking to adults and other children.
- Children use their imaginations well. They occupy themselves in productive learning easily, stepping into role as a teacher conducting a mathematics lesson or in taking a journey in a 'pretend' bus.
- During adult-led activities, learning is good. In phonics lessons, children from across the Reception Year and Key Stage 1 are organised into groups by ability and work is matched well to their different stages of development. During these occasions, children, including the more able and those who struggle, do well in developing their early reading and writing skills.
- Children behave well in Reception. They get on well with each other and work harmoniously in small groups. They quickly respond to adults' requests; for example, to come together as a group or to clear up the work areas at the end of sessions. They listen politely to adults and to each other. Adults are vigilant in regard to safety; children are safe and secure during all activities.



## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	123558
<b>Local authority</b>	Telford and Wrekin
<b>Inspection number</b>	442556

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>	129
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Pauline Heffernan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Stacey Beale (Acting Headteacher)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 October 2012
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