

St Mary and St John Catholic Primary School

Caledonia Road, Wolverhampton, WV2 1HZ

Inspection dates

29–30 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy
	This inspection:	Good 2
Leadership and management	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
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.

- Strong, determined and ambitious leadership by the headteacher, senior leaders and governors is raising pupils' achievement effectively.
- Pupils have a great thirst for knowledge and their behaviour is impeccable. They get on extremely well together and embrace the school's deeply held values.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe in a wide range of situations including when using the internet.
- Achievement is good. Standards are rising and pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- The attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and pupils whose first language is not English are improving in all subjects.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and make learning interesting for pupils. Their high expectations ensure that pupils work hard and produce work of a good quality.
- A previous weakness in mathematical standards, compared to those in reading and writing, is being eliminated.
- Children settle quickly when they start Reception, and feel confident and secure. They achieve well and enjoy learning.
- Governors have a good knowledge of the school's performance and provide highly effective support and challenge to ensure pupils' achievement continues to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The most-able pupils do not always reach the highest levels of attainment because sometimes they are not given sufficiently demanding work to do.
- Pupils do not always have the opportunity to respond to teachers' marking comments.
- Pupils are not being given enough opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills to real-life problem-solving situations.
- Pupils in some classes are not developing their inference and deduction skills in reading effectively.
- Pupils' spelling ability is holding back their writing.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in 13 lessons or parts of lessons. These were undertaken jointly with the headteacher or assistant headteacher.
- Members of the inspection team heard pupils read and, with the mathematics and English subject leaders, looked closely at samples of pupils' work.
- A meeting was held with the Chair of the Governing Body together with four other governors. Inspectors also met with senior and middle leaders, a member of the academy board and with the school's educational consultant.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation including information on pupils' attainment and progress, behaviour and safety records, the school's view of its own performance, records of the monitoring of teaching and learning, documentation about performance management, minutes of governing body meetings and safeguarding documents.
- Informal conversations with pupils took place during lessons and at break times. An inspector also held an in-depth discussion with some Year 6 pupils about their work and views of school.
- Inspectors took account of the 18 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View). They also spoke with parents at the start and end of the school day. The inspectors also looked at questionnaires completed by 18 members of staff.

Inspection team

David Edwards, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Benetia Mounsey

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller than average primary school.
- It became an academy on July 1st 2013.
- The school is a member of the Bishop Cleary Catholic Multi Academy Company. It has its own governing body which is answerable to the board of the academy company.
- The majority of pupils are from a minority ethnic background with a higher than average proportion having English as an additional language. The groups of minority ethnic groups are from a varied background.
- The children in the early years attend the Reception class full time.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, at just under one pupil in five, is broadly in line with the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium, at one pupil in three, is above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- School records show that the proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school partway through Key Stage 2 is much higher than the national average. Pupils entering the school at later stages of Key Stage 2 have often had no previous education in the UK and some children arrive from other parts of the UK.
- School data show that the school meets 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching to consistently outstanding by:
 - developing the coaching and mentoring system to share best practice
 - allowing more time for pupils to respond to the comments teachers make about their work.
- Raise achievement in English and mathematics by :
 - giving pupils more opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills to real-life problem solving skills
 - ensuring consistent challenge in tasks, particularly for the most able
 - developing pupils' ability to use their inference and deduction skills in reading
 - improving pupils' spelling ability to accelerate their progress in writing.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has successfully galvanised the staff into a highly effective team that ambitiously drives forward improvements in achievement. She is passionate about improving teaching and learning for all and her actions have resulted in pupils' good progress.
- School leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. Robust monitoring systems are used effectively to evaluate the impact of strategies and this is contributing to the school's improving performance.
- Middle leaders are increasingly developing their role in checking the progress of groups of pupils in subjects throughout the school. The use of assessment data to evaluate the impact of actions on improving achievement is rigorous and effective. Whilst school data shows that mathematical attainment and progress is improving, initiatives that have been introduced need more time to show greater impact upon pupil achievement.
- The school has begun to develop assessment methods in each subject for the new National Curriculum. Staff are currently working in partnership with other schools to establish systems for accurately tracking the progress pupils are making throughout the school.
- Through regular progress meetings, staff discuss how well pupils are doing and arrange support where necessary. Leaders hold teachers to account for their pupils' success and use the management of their performance to set targets for improvement. This means that staff are very clear about what they need to do to help pupils make good progress.
- The additional funding helps disadvantaged pupils to achieve well and to enjoy all the opportunities to take part in trips and extra clubs that others access. The funding buys additional teaching support for eligible pupils which ensures that they make the same good progress as their classmates. This demonstrates the school's commitment to equal opportunities.
- The school is skilled at quickly identifying the needs of pupils whose first language is not English, including those pupils who join the school partway through the school year. The school has bilingual assistants who support pupils in developing their language and communication so that they can quickly improve their reading, writing and mathematical skills.
- Pupils develop a respect for people of other faiths and cultures, for example, through visiting different places of worship through their topic work in school. They have a strong sense of right and wrong and a good sense of fair play in line with British values. Within school they ensure there is no discrimination. This contributes very well to their strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness and makes them ready for life in modern Britain.
- The school makes good use of the primary school sports funding to increase the range of sports available at the end of the school day and enhance provision in lessons through specialist sports coaches. During the last two years there has been an increase in competitive sports matches and increased participation in after-school clubs. This is helping to promote an active and healthy lifestyle.
- Parents are supportive of the school and the headteacher and staff work very effectively work to support families in all aspects of school life.
- All staff and governors consider keeping pupils safe is their prime responsibility. Safeguarding requirements are fully met.
- The school's external consultant provides a range of professional development for the staff and has an accurate understanding of the school's performance which confirms the school's ability to improve further.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governance is effective because governors have a good understanding of using data to confirm the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They are very aware of the impact of teaching and learning on pupils' progress in different subjects and year groups. They know how the pupil premium is spent and the impact it is having. They keep a close eye on pupils' progress and how their performance compares with that of pupils in other schools. They are clear about the role of the management of teachers' performance in holding teachers to account and developing their skills. Governors know what the school is doing to reward good teaching and how it would deal with any underperformance, should that arise.
- Governors actively involve themselves in the life of the school and visit on a regular basis to find out firsthand how it is getting on. They do not simply rely on the information they receive from the headteacher. For example, they meet with their link subject leader at least once each term to find out what is happening. This puts them in a strong position to challenge leaders about all aspects of the school's work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are very polite and courteous, showing consideration and respect to others. Relationships are exemplary: pupils work very well together in a variety of situations and take care of each other. The school's Christian ethos has a very positive impact on all aspects of the work of the school.
- The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to Parent View are of the opinion that children are well behaved in school. School records show that there are very few incidents of poor behaviour and that these are dealt with quickly and effectively by the school. Pupils say that there is no bullying at school because one pupil stated, 'Mrs. Hanslip has a zero tolerance policy on bullying'.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning throughout the school. They are always keen to learn and work well learning from each other.
- Pupils feel highly valued in the school and are eager to take on responsibilities. They enjoy being house captains, representing other pupils on the school council and taking part in events. They also enjoy taking part in sports where they represent the school with pride.
- School records show that attendance is higher than the national average. The well-attended breakfast club makes a contribution in this area and gives pupils a good start to the day.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils say bullying is not a problem for them, although occasionally they may fall out. Parents are unreservedly positive about pupils' safety.
- The pastoral support for pupils is of outstanding quality and staff develop pupils' personal qualities extremely well. The school vigorously pursues its support for the school's most vulnerable pupils, working closely with parents and outside agencies to meet the needs of such pupils.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of different types of bullying, including cyber bullying. They use this knowledge to recognise and challenge any bullying behaviours on the rare occasions they occur. It also gives them the confidence to discuss bullying openly with their classmates and staff.
- Pupils know how to stay safe in all aspects of their daily life. They also have an excellent appreciation of e-safety as a result of the work of the school. They apply their understanding to everyday situations as they may arise.

- Parents value the care provided for children by staff at school and believe that their children feel safe and are well looked after at school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good and as a result all pupils learn well.
- The headteacher has strengthened teaching by ensuring lessons have clear learning objectives that are closely linked to pupils' previous learning and this has contributed to pupils making consistent progress.
- Teachers use their good subject knowledge of mathematics, reading and writing to plan lessons that motivate pupils to learn. As a result, pupils enjoy their learning and are making good progress.
- Teachers very effectively use their skills in questioning to reinforce previous learning and to extend and deepen pupils' thinking. For example, during a Year 6 mathematics activity, pupils were skilfully encouraged to consider how to read and interpret scales in measuring capacity.
- Phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is taught well and pupils are able to apply phonic skills in independent reading. Where necessary, the work is matched to support the learning needs of pupils at the early stages of reading and writing.
- Teaching assistants are trained well. They work closely with teachers to plan and provide effective support for individuals and groups of pupils to help them make good progress.
- Occasionally, work for the most-able pupils is not matched precisely to their needs because there is too much repetition of work that pupils already know and can do. This slows their progress and they do not achieve as well as they could.
- Pupils' books are accurately marked and teachers provide feedback to pupils about the quality of their work. However, feedback is not always consistent, particularly in mathematics, and pupils do not have enough opportunities to act upon the advice and guidance provided by their teachers.
- Teachers have high expectation of pupils' work and pupils show a pride in their work in all subjects. This is contributing to improved achievement in all year groups.
- Teachers carefully plan work in mathematics. As a result pupils' computational skills develop well and the school is covering the requirements of the new National Curriculum effectively. However, pupils do not get enough opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills to real-life problem solving situations.
- The impact of teaching on reading is very positive because pupils are very enthusiastic about reading. Teachers choose high-quality texts to capture the imagination of individual classes. For example, in a Year 6 guided reading session pupils were using examples of the text to support their arguments. However, in some classes pupils' skills of inference and deduction are not well developed.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the school in Reception with skills that are broadly typical for their age. An increasing proportion of children are starting school with difficulties in language and communication or personal, social and emotional awareness. A significant proportion have limited English language skills.
- They make good progress in the Reception class because teaching staff get to know them quickly and provide work that suits them. They focus effectively on helping children to develop their early reading, writing and numerical skills.
- In 2014 an above average proportion of pupils reached the required standard in the Year 1 phonics check. All pupils met the required standard at Year 2.

- As the school converted to be an academy in July 2013 there is only one year of national data available.
- Pupils made good progress throughout Year 1 and 2, but did not attain average standards in reading, writing or mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils performed above other pupils in school and other pupils nationally.
- In 2014 standards at the end of Year 6 were below the national average. The picture was also slightly distorted because of pupils who started at, or left, this school during the key stage. The school succeeded in raising standards later in the year, but not enough pupils reached the higher levels in reading, writing or mathematics. Pupils made progress from Key Stage 1 to 2 that was broadly in line with that seen nationally. They made better than expected progress in writing, but not so in mathematics or reading.
- School data show that progress in Years 1 to 5 was good in all three subjects over the last school year.
- Current school data show that the attainment of the present Year 6 is rising quickly. They have made good progress and are on track to achieve the challenging targets set for them.
- The school has taken effective action to address mathematical standards this year by modifying the curriculum and progress has been more rapid. Pupils' knowledge of place value has improved significantly and they are getting more opportunities to undertake mathematical investigations. However, pupils are not getting sufficient opportunities to develop their real-life problem solving skills in the subject.
- Writing has improved because pupils have good opportunities to undertake extended writing activities. However, in some classes pupils' spelling skills are weak and this detracts from the quality of work.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups do as well as other pupils and there are no significant differences in their performance. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those who join partway through Key Stage 2 are given good support from the time they join the school. Teaching staff make sure they are fully involved in all activities and adapt their teaching to suit pupils' needs.
- Disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to their classmates and to pupils nationally. There is no significant difference between their standards and those of others, with these pupils outperforming their classmates in some year groups, and being a little behind them in others. The 2014 school data show that they were two years behind their classmates in mathematics and English, Spelling and Grammar, two terms behind in reading and a year behind in writing. The school has made a concerted effort to close the gap in attainment and current school data and work in pupils' books shows that the gaps are closing rapidly across the school.
- The provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is managed well and, as a result, they make the same progress as others from their individual starting points.
- The proportion of pupils exceeding expected rates of progress at the end of Year 6 in 2014 was lower in reading and mathematics than in writing. At times, the most-able pupils are not adequately challenged in lessons and do not always have the opportunity to act upon guidance from teachers on how to improve their work. As a result, this group does not make as much progress as it could.

The early years provision

is good

- Children settle quickly into the early years. They soon make friends and learn to play collaboratively. Classroom routines are well established. As a result, children become confident in doing things for themselves, such as selecting resources to support their learning.
- The supportive atmosphere in the early years means that children feel safe, are not afraid to make mistakes and learn quickly. This contributes to their excellent attitudes to learning and outstanding behaviour. They are very keen to share what they are learning with visitors.

- Children follow instructions and listen carefully to adults and each other and are good at taking turns. Activities are planned carefully to meet children’s varying needs, abilities and interests. Children who have English as an additional language receive additional support to develop their language and communication skills. As a result, they learn as effectively as their classmates.

- Teaching is good. A wide range of interesting activities holds children’s interest and keep them involved in learning throughout their play, both inside and out.

- Children are happy and confident and engage enthusiastically in learning. Adults skilfully intervene to support their learning in play-based activities, such as when a group of boys were rolling balls down a drainpipe into a bucket. A member of staff intervened and provided effective questioning. As a result the boys were able to roll more balls into the bucket.

- Leadership and management of the early years are very effective. Assessment is used well to monitor progress and plan for the differing needs of all abilities. Safety is promoted in all areas of children’s learning. As a result, children know the importance of health and safety: for example, they wash their hands willingly and thoroughly before starting their school lunches.

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	139800
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	449841

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	195
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Darmody
Headteacher	J Hanslip
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
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