

# St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School

Farrington Road, Cullercoats, North Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE30 3EY

**Inspection dates** 28–29 April 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
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		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- The school has improved rapidly and provides an outstanding education for its pupils which includes their personal development as well as their academic achievement.
- The school is extremely well led by a highly effective headteacher, ably supported by an equally committed senior leader and middle leaders. Together they have taken swift and decisive action to improve the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils.
- Pupils achieve exceptionally well. The standards reached are high and many pupils make more progress than is expected of them from their starting points.
- The quality of teaching has improved significantly. It is often outstanding and never less than good. Teachers plan lessons that meet the different needs of all groups of pupils, enabling them to make rapid progress. A very high standard of marking and feedback ensures that pupils know how to improve their work.
- Pupils' behaviour is of an impressively high standard at all times. Pupils are proud to be members of their friendly and welcoming school community.
- Bullying is very rare. Pupils say that they feel extremely safe at all times because of the hard work of all the adults in school to keep them safe.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is very well developed through all that the pupils do in school. The exciting curriculum and the broad range of activities offered to pupils ensure that they become confident and competent young citizens with a very good understanding of modern Britain.
- Governors are extremely effective in challenging and supporting the school in its drive to become the best it can be for the benefit of its pupils.
- Children thrive in the very caring and nurturing environment of the early years provision. They make increasingly rapid progress, especially when learning indoors. However, their learning sometimes slows because the outdoor environment is not as well resourced.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning throughout the school; they observed two lessons jointly with the headteacher and senior leader.
- Inspectors had meetings with pupils from Year 5 and Year 6, members of the school's pupil focus group, with the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors as well as with the school's local authority Educational Development Partner. They also held meetings with the special educational needs coordinator, the leader of early years and the school's middle leaders. Inspectors also talked to parents at different times during the inspection and talked informally with pupils at break and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors listened to pupils in Years 2 and 6 read.
- Inspectors took account of 69 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and 13 questionnaires completed by the staff. They also considered the school's own survey of parental satisfaction.
- Inspectors observed the school at work and looked at a range of documents, including internal and external information relating to pupils' progress, pupils' workbooks, school improvement planning and the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its own performance. Inspectors considered reports written by the local authority, documents relating to the management of teachers' performance, minutes of governing body meetings and safeguarding and child protection documents.

## Inspection team

Peter Eeva, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Timothy Nelson	Additional Inspector
Deborah Wylie	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- Almost all the pupils are White British and very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average. (The pupil premium is additional government funding the school receives to support pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority.)
- Children attend the Nursery class on a part-time basis and the Reception class full time.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics by the end of year 6.

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

- Improve the outdoors environment in early years so that learning and progress can take place at least at the same very good rate as it does indoors.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are outstanding

- The deeply committed headteacher, very ably supported by leaders at all levels, has skilfully guided the school through a difficult period with great determination. Leaders know the school extremely well and provide excellent leadership and management. Together with an equally effective and determined governing body, they have taken swift action to bring about improvements in all areas and especially in the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils. They demonstrate a passion and commitment for further improvement and are far from complacent, continually striving to make the school the very best it can be.
- There are extremely effective systems for checking on pupils' progress and, as a result, any pupil who is at risk of falling behind is quickly identified and appropriate support provided so that they can catch up.
- There are similarly rigorous systems in place to check on teachers' performance and this information is very effectively used by leaders at all levels to continually improve the quality of teaching. This information is used to set challenging targets for teachers and to advise governors about teachers' pay awards.
- The curriculum is very carefully planned to allow pupils to make excellent progress in all subjects but also to develop them as citizens. An impressive range of visits, visitors and after-school clubs and activities ensures that pupils develop an excellent understanding of traditional British values and become very well-rounded citizens who are more than ready for the next stage in their education. Pupils' spiritual development is a real strength of the school.
- The pupil premium is used very effectively to support the very small number of eligible pupils. Extra support is provided individually or in small groups and, as a result, these pupils typically make very good progress from their starting points.
- The primary school sport funding is also used very effectively. The school is able to offer a wider range of sports including basketball and golf and pupils are able to take part in a greater number of sporting competitions and festivals. Effective professional development has been provided for teachers and the quality of teaching in physical education lessons has improved as a result.
- Safety is a very high priority for all in the school. Leaders go to impressive lengths to ensure that there are rigorous systems in place to ensure safety at all times whether in school or out of school on visits or trips. The school works very hard to foster excellent relationships and to tackle discrimination in any form. Leaders make sure that all staff are vigilant for any signs of extremist views or behaviour and are familiar with the dangers of radicalisation.
- The local authority has provided much-appreciated support, especially in the school's successful drive to address areas for improvement identified in the last inspection.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors bring a wide range of experience and skills which they use to excellent effect in supporting and challenging the school to improve for the benefit of all pupils. They ensure that they know the school extremely well; they have a very clear understanding of the strengths of the school and where it needs to improve further. They are particularly well informed about pupils' achievement and progress. They use this information together with their knowledge of Teachers' Standards to help manage teachers' performance and ensure there are clear links between performance and salary increases.
  - Governors oversee the spending of pupil premium and sport funding and are aware of the positive impacts these funds are having on pupils' achievement and physical well-being. Governors are meticulous in ensuring that the school meets its statutory responsibilities with regard to safeguarding and child protection.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are extremely well behaved both in and out of class. They are very happy and display really positive attitudes to their learning, which ensures that lessons can proceed without interruptions.
- Pupils say that behaviour is of a high standard and the school's records show that it has been of a very high standard since the last inspection. There are very high expectations for behaviour shared by adults and pupils alike and older pupils set excellent examples to younger ones.
- Pupils willingly take on roles of responsibility such as digital ambassadors and many apply for the different focus groups which are formed to give pupils a say in the development of the school. Older pupils take

responsibility for running activities during wet break times. No matter what the job, pupils take their responsibilities very seriously and carry out their duties conscientiously.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils say that they feel extremely safe in school and when on trips or visits. They acknowledge and appreciate the work of adults in the school to keep them safe and parents agree that the school is a safe and secure environment.
- Pupils have a detailed and accurate understanding of bullying in its varied forms. They know what to look out for but are sure that it is very rare. They know what to do if any occurred and are confident it would be dealt with swiftly and effectively.
- Attendance is above average and has improved as a result of the school's thorough systems for checking on, and following up, any absences. Pupils are eager to come to school and arrive punctually.
- Pupils develop a very good understanding of the risks they might face and know how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations, including when using the internet.

### The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teaching is often outstanding and never less than good. It has a significant impact on pupils' attainment and progress over time. Teachers make sure that work is set at exactly the right level for pupils of all abilities. They ask questions which not only stretch pupils and encourage them to develop their ideas but also allow teachers to reshape work during lessons. Lessons are extremely interesting and capture pupils' imagination. In a year 2 class, for example, pupils became absorbed in writing a diary entry in the role of a passenger on a shipwrecked boat.
- Teachers make sure that pupils are aware of what they will learn and how they will know if they have been successful. Marking and feedback is of a high standard and pupils routinely respond to suggestions for improvements that teachers make. Older pupils are becoming increasingly better at judging the success of their own work because these skills are developed from an early age.
- Writing is taught very effectively. Pupils have many opportunities to write about a range of interesting topics. They are well prepared for writing tasks, which they perform often at length and with accuracy in their spelling, punctuation and grammar. In a Year 1 class, pupils made excellent use of story maps to plan a story about a fantasy world.
- Reading is very well developed from an early age. Pupils develop a very good knowledge of phonics (the sounds letters make) and then use these skills to become increasingly proficient readers. They are given regular opportunities to read in school and each class has its own library. Older pupils organise and run book clubs for younger pupils. They select the books carefully and lead guided reading with their club. As a result of this and other initiatives, such as having a 'Reading Patron', younger pupils develop a love of reading.
- The teaching of mathematics is very effective. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to use their developing mathematical skills not only in mathematics lessons but also in other subjects. They develop a good grounding in basic mathematical skills early on and so their calculations become more rapid and accurate as they move through the school. Parents are encouraged to play a part in supporting their children's learning. The 'Magnificent Mathematics' sessions seen during the inspection, where pupils learnt mathematics alongside their parents, were well attended and much appreciated.
- Teaching assistants play a very important role in helping some pupils to learn. They are skilled at intervening where necessary and have a very clear understanding of the needs of different individuals.

### The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Most children start school with skills that are in line with those that are typical for their age. They make rapid progress so that, by the end of Year 6, they reach standards that are above average.
- Excellent teaching means that progress is rapid in Key Stage 1. The proportion of pupils who reach the required standard in the phonics screening check in Year 1 is very high and standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average and have risen year-on-year.
- This rapid progress continues in Key Stage 2 in all subjects. The proportion of pupils who make the progress expected of them is high and the proportion who make more than expected progress compares very favourably with national averages. Standards reached at the end of Year 6 have also continued to rise and are above average, with an increasing number attaining the very high Level 6 in national tests in

English and mathematics.

- Pupils with special educational needs make similarly rapid progress, often from lower starting points. This is because their needs are accurately identified and the right support is provided by skilled adults who know exactly what each pupil needs.
- The most able pupils are challenged and provided with work that stretches them. These pupils relish the extra challenge and respond with enthusiasm. Where it is needed, the school provides extra support from adults who have specialist skills, especially in mathematics. As a result, this group of pupils reach very high standards in English and mathematics.
- The school provides extra support for the very small number of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium funding, including those entitled to free school meals. As a result, this group of pupils makes the same rapid progress as others in the school. However, the number of pupils is too small to allow meaningful comparison in attainment between these pupils and others in the school and others nationally.

### The early years provision

is good

- Children join the early years with the skills and understanding that are typical for children of their age. They make increasingly rapid progress and the majority of children reach at least the standards expected of them in all areas, with many exceeding these; they are ready for learning in Year 1 at the end of the Reception Year.
- The early years is well led and managed. The leader of the early years has created an effective team of staff who are good practitioners and provide good-quality teaching. They have an excellent understanding of the needs of the children. They plan interesting activities which capture children's interests and imagination and which provide excellent stimuli for children to learn. During the inspection, children were eager to explain how postman Pete and others help us, following a much-enjoyed visit from a postman who is also a parent.
- Safety is always important to all the adults. They take great pains to ensure that the children are safe at all times whether learning inside or outside. There are very well thought-out arrangements for the start and end of the school day and parents agree that their children are safe when in early years. Children behave extremely well. They play and learn happily together and develop skills in sharing and taking turns that help them to learn well.
- The indoor provision is very well resourced and allows learning in all the required areas. Adults have worked very hard to create a stimulating environment which gives children opportunities to make very good progress. However, the outside area is not as well equipped and although children enjoy their play outside, the rate of learning is not as rapid because there is not the same rich variety of opportunities to learn through play.

## 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>	108618
<b>Local authority</b>	North Tyneside
<b>Inspection number</b>	462234

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	257
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Caroline McLean
<b>Headteacher</b>	Colette Bland
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 June 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 2008812
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