

Our Lady and St Brendan's Catholic Primary School

The Bank, Idle, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD10 0QA

Inspection dates 9–10 June 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils do not make consistently good progress in all classes and subjects because the quality of teaching is not consistently good.
- Pupils, particularly boys, do less well in writing than they do in reading and mathematics. Pupils do not have enough interesting and exciting opportunities to use and extend their writing skills in other subjects.
- Teachers do not always give pupils work which is well matched to what they already know and can do. The most-able pupils, in particular, are not always given tasks that are sufficiently challenging.
- Marking does not consistently show pupils how to make their work better. Teachers do not always check that pupils respond to the advice given.
- Teachers' expectations of how pupils present their work in all subjects are not consistently high enough. They do not always ensure that pupils check the accuracy of grammar, punctuation and spelling in their writing.
- Senior and middle leaders do not always use information collected about pupils' progress and the quality of teaching effectively enough. They do not pinpoint precisely how to bring about improvements and to measure the impact of actions taken.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils enjoy coming to this happy, caring and inclusive school.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years. They quickly become confident and independent, and make good progress.
- Parents are made to feel welcome in the school. Many activities take place which help to involve them in their children's learning.
- The curriculum provides a range of activities which contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils behave well and have good attitudes to learning. They say that they feel safe and well looked after.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and other leaders are working effectively to drive ongoing improvements. They are committed to doing the best for all pupils.
- Governors know what still needs to be done to improve. They are keen to develop their skills so that they can challenge school leaders even more effectively.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes; this included one observation carried out jointly with the headteacher. They observed the teaching of reading skills and listened to pupils reading. They also observed teaching in small support groups. They looked at examples of pupils' work to gain a view of teaching over time.
- The inspectors held meetings with pupils, staff, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. They observed and talked with pupils at lunchtimes and during their break times.
- Inspectors spoke with parents informally before and after school. They took account of the school's own surveys of parents' and pupils' views, and of the 28 questionnaires returned by staff. There were no published responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school's most recent data on pupils' attainment and progress across the school, the school's own view of its effectiveness and its plans for improvement. They also considered information relating to checks on the quality of teaching.
- In addition, the inspectors looked at arrangements for safeguarding pupils and at records relating to behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Christine Potter, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Mark Williams

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average, but is increasing.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The early years provision comprises a Reception class which children attend full time.
- 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.
- The school provides a breakfast club.
- There have been several changes to staffing since the last inspection, including the appointment of a new headteacher in September 2013. There have also been changes within the governing body, including a new Chair of the Governing Body.
- The school is part of the Bradford East One Partnership of schools and the Catholic Schools Partnership.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and raise achievement by:
 - ensuring that work is always matched well to what pupils already know and can do, and is sufficiently challenging, particularly for the most-able pupils
 - making sure that all teachers consistently implement the school's marking policy to help pupils improve their work
 - always having high expectations of pupils' accuracy in grammar, punctuation and spelling in their writing and of how they present their work in all subjects
 - giving pupils, especially boys, more interesting and exciting opportunities to use and extend their writing skills in all subjects.
- Strengthen the impact of leadership and management at all levels by using information collected about pupils' progress and the quality of teaching more effectively in order to pinpoint precisely how to bring about improvements and to measure the impact of actions taken.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management **require improvement**

- Senior and middle leaders do not always have a strong enough impact on improving teaching and pupils' achievement. They gather a wide range of data about pupils' progress, watch lessons, look at pupils' work and talk to pupils about their learning. However, they do not use this information sufficiently well to pinpoint precisely how to bring about improvements in the quality of teaching and to raise standards further. Their plans for improvement do not always show exactly how the effectiveness of their actions will be measured.
- The achievement of different groups of pupils across Key Stages 1 and 2 is inconsistent. However, senior leaders are fully committed to providing equality of opportunity for all. They fully acknowledge the need to provide more challenging learning for the most-able pupils and to improve boys' writing skills.
- The school makes good use of the extra funding to support disadvantaged pupils. Teaching assistants and the learning mentor provide targeted support for pupils to help improve their progress. The family involvement officer works closely with pupils and their families. Leaders ensure that pupils who are eligible for the funding are able to take part in all school activities. The attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils is closing.
- Actions taken, by senior and middle leaders, such as making better use of guided reading sessions, are being reflected in higher standards across the school in reading. Questionnaires completed during the inspection indicate that staff morale is high. There is a culture within the school where staff and pupils are encouraged to reflect on how well they are doing. All staff regularly access training to develop and improve their skills.
- The school goes to great lengths to involve parents in their children's learning. Well-attended workshops such as 'Number Crunchers' help them to develop the skills they need to support their children at home. Coffee mornings and class assemblies give parents the chance to see what their children are doing in lessons and to work alongside them. Parents say that they feel well informed. As one of them commented, 'The school is always open to help you.'
- The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of visits, visitors, residentials and clubs. Themed days successfully broaden pupils' experiences. For example, a successful Winter Olympics day gave pupils the chance to have a go at ice skating and try their hand at making a bobsleigh. The curriculum also has a strong focus on developing pupils' basic skills, including in information and communication technology. However, pupils do not have enough interesting and exciting opportunities to use and extend their writing skills in other subjects.
- Good relations are fostered well across the school, with pupils from all different backgrounds working and playing together happily. New pupils are welcomed and made to feel at home. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Pupils develop a good understanding of different faiths and cultures. They have a strong sense of right and wrong, and appreciate opportunities to reflect on their feelings and those of others. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is therefore promoted well.
- Pupils' knowledge of British values is enhanced by democratic elections to the school council and by a recent project on the general election. They enjoy taking responsibility, work with staff to create school rules and have been involved in re-organising lunchtime arrangements. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The primary school sport funding is used well. Specialist coaches have helped pupils and staff develop their skills. Participation in competitive sports and out-of-school sporting activities has increased significantly over the past two years.
- The school currently receives light-touch support from the local authority. Strong partnerships with other schools have contributed effectively to school improvement, especially through staff training opportunities and the sharing of ideas and good practice.
- Arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements. There are clear and effective policies and procedures in place, which are checked regularly by senior leaders and governors. Staff and governors are trained to the appropriate levels.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors provide effective support and challenge for the school. They share the headteacher's commitment and determination to improve the school. They have reviewed their work and are undertaking training to improve their skills further.
 - Governors have a good understanding of the school's performance data. They particularly appreciate the colour-coded information that they receive from the headteacher, which shows them exactly how well different groups of pupils are doing in different subjects. They have fully supported the actions

taken to improve standards in reading and are checking closely to make sure that these continue to be effective.

- Governors are linked to classes and gain first-hand information on teaching and learning. They ensure that decisions relating to teachers' pay progression are linked to their performance and to pupils' achievement. They have a sound grasp of school finances and are particularly keen to ensure that the pupil premium funding is used wisely and has an impact on the progress of eligible pupils. They check effectively that safeguarding requirements are fully met.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are friendly, polite and enjoy school. They move around the school in a safe and orderly manner, showing consideration for others. Well-established routines mean that pupils come in from break times sensibly and quickly settle to their learning. Pupils get on well together, both when working and playing. They share and value each other's ideas.
- Pupils try hard to do well and listen attentively to teachers. Sometimes their behaviour and attitudes to learning are outstanding. This is when the work really captures their interests and challenges them well. Occasionally, when work in lessons is not at the right level for all of them, they become restless and fidgety, and this hinders their progress.
- There are clear systems in place so that pupils understand the consequences of their actions. Pupils themselves have identified the kinds of behaviours which they feel should 'move them on to red'. They demonstrate awareness that a lack of respect for others is not acceptable. They admit that sometimes they do fall out with one another and call each other names, but that this is always sorted out quickly.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils say that they feel absolutely safe in school. They trust the adults in school to look after them and know that they can always talk to them if they are worried or upset. The responses to the school's survey of parents' views and comments from parents who spoke to inspectors all indicate that parents agree that the school keeps their children safe.
- Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of different types of bullying. They say that bullying is extremely rare in school, but are clear about the steps to take, should it occur. They are confident that it would be dealt with quickly and effectively.
- The school's curriculum is effective in ensuring that pupils know how to keep themselves safe. For example, they know that they should not give out personal details or click on pop-up links on websites when they are using the internet. Year 6 pupils learn how to travel safely to high school, while swimming lessons in Years 4 and 5 ensure that pupils understand water safety.
- The school works tirelessly to emphasise the importance of good attendance. Classes compete to have the best attendance each week. The school effectively supports specific pupils and their families in order to help pupils attend regularly and on time. Attendance has therefore improved and is now broadly average.
- The school's breakfast club is well attended and provides a calm and settled start to the school day. Pupils said that they would give it 'ten out of ten' for the food and activities on offer. Through providing guaranteed places for some pupils, the club has contributed to the improvements in attendance.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Work in pupils' books, the school's assessment information and records of checks carried out on teaching all indicate that teaching over time and across the school is inconsistent and requires improvement.
- Teachers do not always give pupils work that is matched well enough to what they already know and can do. In particular, it is not always sufficiently challenging for the most-able pupils. Expectations of how pupils present their work in all subjects are not always high enough, leading to untidy working and careless mistakes. This slows the progress that pupils make.
- Senior leaders have introduced a clear marking policy. There is evidence that some teachers are now using this effectively to show pupils what they have done well, how to improve their work and to check that they have done so. However, not all teachers are implementing the policy consistently.

- The teaching of writing is improving because there has been an emphasis on teaching pupils how to use more interesting sentence structure and vocabulary when they write. However, there has been less attention to ensuring that pupils use grammar, punctuation and spelling accurately in their written work. In addition, teachers do not always encourage pupils to use and extend their writing skills in other subjects. This means that pupils, particularly boys, make slower progress in writing than in reading and mathematics.
- Effective teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) has led to improvements in pupils' reading skills. A more consistent approach to teaching reading throughout the school, including the use of reading journals, and a greater focus on ensuring that pupils understand and can interpret what they are reading, is raising standards in reading. Older pupils are enthusiastic readers and, during the inspection, showed how they can read aloud with considerable fluency and expression.
- Regular opportunities are provided for pupils to practise and consolidate their basic number and calculation skills. There is also a strong focus on applying these skills to solving written problems, and to using mathematical skills in other subjects, such as when carrying out surveys or drawing graphs.
- There are good relationships between adults and pupils. Regular praise and encouragement mean that most pupils are keen to do well and that their efforts are valued. Tasks are usually explained clearly so that pupils know what is expected of them. Pupils understand and follow classroom routines which ensure that time is not wasted between and during lessons. Resources and equipment are organised well to support pupils' learning.
- Teaching assistants are highly skilled and experienced. They know the pupils and their individual needs well, and work alongside teachers to plan activities. They provide valuable support for pupils' learning.
- When work captures pupils' interests and precisely matches their abilities, pupils are engaged and achieve well. For example, in a Year 3 science lesson, one group of pupils were excitedly sticking labels on bones on a model skeleton while another group made and labelled their own diagrams. The most-able pupils were further challenged and deepened their understanding as they used computers to create fact files about skeletons.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils do not make consistently good progress in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stages 1 and 2. In most year groups, the school's current data indicate that most pupils have made expected progress during this school year from their starting points. However, too few of them have made better progress than this. Pupils, particularly boys, achieve less well in writing than in reading and mathematics.
- Published data show that standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have been steadily declining since the last inspection. Pupils' overall attainment was significantly below average in 2014. Achievement in reading was particularly low. Results at the end of Key Stage 2 have been more variable, but there was a dip in overall attainment and progress in 2014. Pupils' overall attainment was below average. Pupils in Year 6 did not perform as well as was expected in the reading test and attainment was significantly below average.
- The school's predictions for the end of this school year, confirmed by inspection evidence, indicate that achievement has improved at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. In particular, progress in reading has improved. Most pupils are on track to achieve the standards expected for their age at the end of both key stages in reading, writing and mathematics in 2015.
- Over time, the achievement of the most-able pupils has not been good enough because they do not receive work that is sufficiently challenging. In 2014, too few of them reached standards above those expected for their age at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2. School data, confirmed by inspection evidence, indicate that more pupils in Year 6 this year will reach the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics, but not in Year 2.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 screening check on phonics (letters and the sounds they make) in 2014 was above average. This year, standards are expected to be slightly lower but almost all those pupils in Year 2 who did not reach the standard last year are predicted to do so this year.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress which is similar to, or better than, that of other pupils. This is because of the well-structured teaching and support that they receive. The progress of pupils who speak English as an additional language is also similar to, or better than, that of other pupils.
- The published data for 2014 indicate that disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 made progress in reading, writing and mathematics which was similar to that of other pupils in the school, but was lower than the progress of other pupils nationally. Disadvantaged pupils who left the school in Year 6 were approximately

two terms behind other pupils in the school in mathematics and writing and one-and-a-half terms behind other pupils in reading. Compared to non-disadvantaged pupils nationally, they were about three terms behind in mathematics, three-and-a-half terms behind in reading and two terms behind in writing.

- The school's current data show that disadvantaged pupils are making progress in all year groups which is similar to, or on occasions better than, that of other non-disadvantaged pupils in the school. Gaps between their attainment and that of other pupils in the school and nationally are closing.

The early years provision

is good

- The majority of children start school with knowledge and skills which are below those typical for their age, particularly in aspects of communication, language, reading, writing and social skills. Children are looked after well and they settle in quickly. Most of them make good progress and achieve well from their different starting points because of the consistently good teaching and support that they receive.
- In 2014, the proportion of children in the Reception class reaching a good level of development was below average. The standards reached by boys, particularly in reading and writing, were well below those reached by girls. However, a much larger proportion of children in the current Reception class are on track to reach a good level of development in 2015. There has been a particular focus on developing reading and writing skills, including using the outdoor area more effectively to promote boys' writing. Gaps between boys' and girls' achievement have closed, and children are well prepared for their future learning in Year 1.
- Children enjoy a good mixture of activities which are led by adults or which they choose themselves. They are confident and independent as they explore the indoor and outdoor areas. They were observed cooperating particularly well as they used crates, planks and a tarpaulin to build a 'house'. Others were mixing a 'potion to make you stronger' in the mud kitchen, chattering away about the ingredients they were adding and helping each other to use pipettes to add small amounts of different liquids.
- Staff know the children well because of their careful observations and assessments, and the good systems in place to track children's progress. They make sure that they plan activities and 'star challenges' that are precisely targeted to meet children's different learning needs and that are matched closely to their interests. Children who need extra help are identified early so that they get the support that they need to do well.
- Leadership in the early years is good. Staff work together well as a team, sharing information about the children's progress on a daily basis and planning the day's activities together. There is a clear, shared vision for developing and improving the provision further.
- Parents are encouraged from the start to be involved in their children's learning. 'Stay and play' sessions are well attended and 'star moments' mean that parents can contribute their observations to children's progress records.
- Children behave well and understand routines. They clearly feel safe and secure. There are good systems in place to ensure that children are kept safe, including rigorous checks on equipment and clear procedures at the end of the day. The children themselves are well aware of how to stay safe. For example, they were able to explain precisely why it is important to wear sunhats outside in summer.

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	107334
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	461861

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Malewski
Headteacher	Simon Stockdale
Date of previous school inspection	11 April 2011
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