

# St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Fleetwood

London Street, Fleetwood, Lancashire FY7 6EU

<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 January 2016
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have yet to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress as they move through the school.
- Although standards are improving, boys' attainment is lower than girls' attainment at the end of all key stages and in the Year 1 phonics check.
- Weak teaching in lower Key Stage 2 slows pupils' progress and leaves gaps in their grasp of basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. These gaps have to be addressed before pupils can move on with their learning in the next class and this reduces the amount of time available for gaining new skills.
- Not all teachers make frequent checks on pupils' understanding in lessons. Where pupils make mistakes, these are not always identified swiftly enough and this leads to confusion and misunderstanding.
- Subject leadership is in the early stages of development and is not yet strong enough to have a measurable and positive impact on improving the quality of teaching and pupil progress across the full range of subject areas.
- Attendance is low but improving due to the school's work with families to discourage avoidable absence.

### The school has the following strengths

- Improved governance and the appointment of a strong headteacher and deputy headteacher to drive improvement mean that the school has the capacity to continue to improve.
- Leaders have improved the quality of teaching and provision in early years. Standards in this key stage are now rising steadily.
- Parents speak highly of the school's welcoming atmosphere and value the increased range of opportunities to be involved in school activities.
- Pupils make rapid progress in upper Key Stage 2 where the quality of teaching is consistently good and sometimes outstanding.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are polite, courteous and treat everyone in school with great respect. Relationships are strong and pupils are unafraid to ask adults for help if they need it.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress due to well-focused support from teachers and teaching assistants.

## Full report

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

- Improve teaching so that pupils consistently make good progress by ensuring that:
  - teachers routinely check on pupils' work in lessons, particularly when they are working independently or in small groups, so that any misconceptions are swiftly identified and addressed
  - all pupils are clear about what is expected of them as they move to new topics.
- Improve boys' progress so that their attainment at the end of all keys stages, including in the early years, and in the Year 1 phonics check closely matches that of girls.
- Improve attendance until it is at least average.
- Improve leadership by making sure all subject leaders check on the quality of provision, including teaching and that they have a positive impact on pupils' progress.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because leaders have yet to secure consistently good teaching and outcomes for pupils. Although teaching is improving it has not improved rapidly enough to ensure that pupils make solidly good progress in all year groups.
- In the past, teachers were not given enough focused training and professional development. Stronger leadership has improved the situation and teachers are keen to improve their practice. They appreciate recent opportunities to learn from good practice within school and within the local school cluster group and through the effective support of local authority advisers and consultants.
- Following a period of considerable staffing turbulence, staffing is now stable and leaders are in the early stages of developing subject leadership across the wider curriculum. Not all leaders are experienced enough to monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in these subjects and tackle any identified weaknesses.
- This is an inclusive school and this is reflected in the good relationships within the school, with parents and with the local community. Discrimination of any kind, including racist and homophobic, is not tolerated and all members of the school community are treated fairly and with respect.
- Parents say that leaders make them feel very welcome in school. An increasing proportion of them participate in classroom-based activities along with their children and in celebration assemblies.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Collective worship and religious education lessons help pupils develop their understanding, tolerance and respect for diversity in relation to cultures and religions. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Older pupils, for example, demonstrated their understanding of democracy, liberty and the rule of law through writing about these values. For example, one pupil typically wrote that democracy means 'letting people have their say about important things'.
- The school offers a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including residential visits and after-school clubs, that enrich pupils' experiences, enhance their personal development and support them in building a healthy lifestyle. The wider curriculum is well planned. The curriculum is not yet fully effective in accelerating boys' progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs make as much progress as other pupils in the school. The additional pupil premium funding is used to good effect to improve progress of disadvantaged pupils. However, their attendance is lower than that of other pupils in school and nationally. School leaders are aware of this and provide support for improved attendance through the family learning mentor who works closely with vulnerable families.
- The primary school sport and physical education funding is used effectively to give access to a wider range of sports, including gymnastics, and to increase pupils' participation in competitive sports through the local sports partnership. External coaches help teachers and support assistants to develop their skill and expertise in teaching physical education.
- The local authority provides effective ongoing support to the school. It has supported leaders in improving the quality of teaching, appointing skilled senior leaders and in strengthening membership of the governing body.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Governance has been strengthened since the last inspection through the appointment of new governors who bring a wide range of professional expertise, including in education. The local authority has effectively supported this process.
  - Governors are well informed on the school's performance through comprehensive termly reports from the headteacher and offer a high quality of challenge and support for school leaders.
  - Governors check that leaders' decisions to award staff with pay increases reflect improvements in the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils and this supports their effectiveness in holding leaders to account for tackling underperformance in teaching.
  - Governors check that the pupil premium is used to good effect. However, they are yet to ensure that these pupils attend as regularly as other pupils.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. In practice, rigorous adherence to child protection policies and procedures protects both children and staff. In the past, paperwork was sometimes

incomplete and this reduced leaders' and governors' ability to monitor safeguarding arrangements efficiently. This has now been addressed.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment** requires improvement

- Although teaching is improving, it is not solidly good, especially in lower Key Stage 2. As a result, pupils in these classes do not make as much progress in reading, writing and mathematics as in other years, especially the boys. Consequently, gaps in pupils' understanding develop in these years that have to be closed before they are ready to move on in their learning in the next class.
- Teaching is not always effective in ensuring pupils understand what is expected of them. Pupils are sometimes set tasks without enough information on how to complete them successfully. For example, in one lesson, pupils were expected to complete work on comparative and superlative adjectives without any prior explanation of what these terms mean.
- Not all teachers check on pupils' understanding while they are working independently or in small groups. This means that some pupils make mistakes and compound their errors because their misconceptions have not been identified and sorted out. In turn, this limits pupils' progress and causes confusion.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) has improved. Leaders have invested in training for teachers and support staff that has increased their knowledge and skill in this area. Additionally, they have introduced a new scheme to support children in developing their phonics and reading skills from Reception to Year 4. It is too early to see a measurable impact of this on outcomes for pupils, although initial indications are that pupils, particularly boys, are responding positively to the new systems.
- The teaching of reading has also improved. Pupils now have access to a wide range of books and reading materials. Older pupils say that they enjoy reading and are keen to read at home as well as in guided reading sessions and the frequent opportunities they have for independent reading during the school day.
- The best teaching of mathematics is found in Year 2 and upper Key Stage 2 where it is consistently good and sometimes outstanding. Here, pupils have frequent opportunities to apply their calculation skills to a range of challenging practical and word-based problems that extend pupils' thinking and deepen their understanding. In lower Key Stage 2, there is sometimes less evidence of pupils solving problems.
- Marking has improved and gives pupils useful guidance on how to improve their work and the next small steps in their learning. Pupils respond to this well and frequently act on their teachers' advice when editing or correcting their work. Teachers' assessments of pupils' progress are increasingly accurate because they moderate samples of work with one another in school and with colleagues within the local cluster group of schools.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare** requires improvement

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Most teachers promote pupils' personal development well by helping them to develop skills that will make them into successful learners. They encourage pupils to think for themselves and make informed choices. However, in some lessons, pupils' time is wasted in waiting for adult help because teachers have not given clear enough instructions on how to complete work independently or with the help of a partner.
- Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe when using the internet. They know that some sites are not appropriate and that they must never give out details of themselves or their friends while online.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Most pupils are keen to learn and listen well to instructions.
- Pupils' social behaviour is also good. They treat one another kindly and are polite and courteous to adults in the school. Occasionally, pupils fall out with one another, but they understand the difference between this and bullying and say that bullying rarely occurs.
- Racist incidents are extremely rare and pupils do not make nasty homophobic comments about one another. They explain that all pupils and their families are accepted just for being themselves.

- Attendance is below average but improving. The family learning mentor effectively supports this through making rigorous checks on pupils who are absent from school and making sure that they and their families understand the importance of regular attendance and punctuality. The impact of her work in counselling and supporting vulnerable pupils and their families is also seen in the significant reduction in the number of pupils excluded for a fixed-term period. No pupils have been excluded within the current academic year.
- The attendance of disadvantaged pupils is below that of other pupils in the school and well below average. The school is working to improve this, for example by encouraging families to access the breakfast club. However, leaders know that more needs to be done to ensure these pupils are never absent without a very good reason so they do not fall behind in their learning.
- The vast majority of parents agree that pupils' behaviour is good and say this is because relationships are strong and staff are warm and very caring. One parent typically comments that the school 'is like a pair of arms around you'.

### Outcomes for pupils

### require improvement

- Pupils currently in school do not make consistently strong progress in every year group and this is why outcomes require improvement.
- The outcomes from the 2015 statutory tests at the end of Key Stage 2 showed that the progress of this cohort from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics was good and had improved on that of the previous cohort. Inspection evidence shows that this good progress is sustained in the current Year 6 cohort due to the high-quality teaching as pupils move to the end of Key Stage 2. In lower Key Stage 2, however, weaker teaching means that pupils' progress is not consistently good.
- Standards over time in reading, writing and mathematics are slightly below average at the end of Key Stage 1 and broadly average at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the required standard in the Year 1 phonics check was well below average in 2015. Recent improvements to the quality of teaching in this subject mean that progress is more rapid and standards are beginning to rise.
- Boys' performance is weaker than girls' at the end of both key stages, particularly in writing. The work of pupils currently in the school shows that standards are beginning to improve. Recently introduced initiatives to stimulate boys' interests, including a wider range of practical and physical learning opportunities, are beginning to show a positive impact on the amount and quality of boys' writing. There are early indications that the gaps in their performance are narrowing.
- Disadvantaged pupils make the same amount of progress as their peers. Standards over time for these pupils are below those of other pupils in the school and other pupils nationally. In 2015, disadvantaged pupils leaving at the end of Year 6 were approximately a year behind other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Due to focused use of the pupil premium funding and improved teaching, this gap is narrowing, although the relatively poor attendance of disadvantaged pupils sometimes hampers this.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress from their starting points. Teachers make good use of skilled teaching assistants to ensure that these pupils receive good support for their individual needs as they move through the school.
- Work in pupils' topic books shows that progress in science and humanities is variable. In some books there is little evidence of challenge and the quality of pupils' written work is not as strong as it is in their English books.
- Outcomes for most-able pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2 are slightly below average overall but are beginning to show improvement because the quality of teaching is improving and supporting them in making more rapid progress.

### Early years provision

### is good

- Most children enter the school with levels of skills and development that are below those typically expected of their age. Children settle swiftly into the school routines and make good progress because teaching is good. By the end of Reception, a steadily increasing proportion of children reach the

standards expected for their age.

- Adults are skilled in knowing just when to intervene in children's play to extend their learning. At the same time, they use careful assessments of children's progress to plan activities that will move them on quickly and follow up on the children's own interests and enthusiasms.
- Partnerships with parents are increasingly strong. Teachers make home visits before children enter the school so that parents can contribute to assessments of children's starting points. Teachers also make sure that parents are given good information on progress and suggestions as to how they can support their children's learning at home.
- Children behave well. They play together happily, learning to take turns and share toys and resources. Children listen to adults and respond to their instructions. They cheerfully tidy up after activities and develop increasing independence, for example by tackling zips and buttons when putting on outdoor clothing.
- The classroom is vibrant and stimulating for young learners. Outdoors, there is a generous space for the children to use and explore. However, sometimes teachers do not make enough use of this for reading, writing and counting activities and this explains why boys' attainment at the end of Reception is not quite as good as girls'.
- Leadership in the early years is good. Effective actions have improved the quality of teaching, and outcomes for children at the end of Reception are rising year on year.
- Leaders ensure that effective procedures are in place to keep children safe and secure.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	119623
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection Number</b>	10002247

This inspection 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>	148
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Andrew Cafferkey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ann Kowalska
<b>Telephone number</b>	01253 878455
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stmarysrcfleetwoodschool.co.uk">www.stmarysrcfleetwoodschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:head@st-marys-fleetwood.lancs.sch.uk">head@st-marys-fleetwood.lancs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10–11 December 2013

## Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized school in which most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs is average.
- Children in the early years receive full-time education in the Reception class.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- The school manages its own breakfast club.
- There have been major changes to staffing since the last inspection. Both the headteacher and deputy headteacher are new to the school.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in a range of lessons. Most observations took place jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector spoke to a range of pupils about their work and play in school.
- The inspector held meetings with four members of the governing body as well as school leaders and two local authority representatives.
- The inspector took account of 34 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View) in addition to speaking to parents informally on the school yard.
- The inspector observed the overall work of the school and checked various documents and procedures, including the school's plans for improvement and arrangements for checking pupils' attainment and progress. She also looked at documents relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- The inspector considered a wide range of evidence, including the school's records of the quality of teaching over time and pupils' current work in books.

## Inspection team

Jan Corlett, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector



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