

St Vincent's RC Primary School

Monkchester Road, Walker, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE6 2TX

Inspection dates

12–13 October 2016

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The determined and inspiring leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by senior leaders and governors, has transformed pupils' learning in St Vincent's RC Primary School.
- The school has significantly and rapidly improved because all staff together have rigorously tackled previous weaknesses.
- Leaders' and governors' continued determination to excel and eradicate underperformance is translated into effective action. This means that the school continues to improve.
- Outcomes for pupils are now good and have improved since the last inspection. Pupils make good progress from their starting points, including the most able pupils and disadvantaged pupils. Standards reached are continuing to rise.
- As a result of good teaching, pupils learn quickly and can apply their skills across all subjects. Teachers assess pupils' work carefully and give timely support and guidance so that pupils know their next steps in learning.
- Children in the early years make a strong start in their reading, writing and understanding of number. They play and learn happily together as a result of good teaching.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are polite and friendly, and have good manners.
- Pupils' consideration of others, the pride they take in their work and their understanding of how to stay safe are excellent. As a result, their personal development and welfare are outstanding.
- Occasionally, teachers set tasks that are not challenging enough, and some pupils lose concentration in lessons.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment and its impact on outcomes for pupils by:
 - making sure all pupils are set tasks which extend their learning and stretch their thinking, especially the most able pupils
 - checking that the pace of learning allows pupils to be consistently engaged and maintain their concentration.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher has been unwavering in her determination to secure an excellent standard of education for pupils in the school. Alongside governors and senior leaders, she has worked tirelessly and rigorously to eliminate underperformance, improve the quality of teaching and accelerate the pace of progress pupils make in their learning. This has been a success, transforming the school so that it is now good.
- The quality of teaching has improved significantly and is now at least consistently good. Teachers work extremely well together, and share the leaders' ambition to improve the quality of teaching still further to allow all pupils to excel. Leaders know that further refinements to particular elements of teaching are required in order to secure outstanding outcomes for pupils.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate and thorough understanding of what the school does well, and what it needs to do in order to become even more successful. Procedures to monitor and evaluate the quality of the school's performance, including checking the quality of teaching, are incisive and detailed. A strong sense of drive and urgency to improve is evident in all that the school does.
- The school's curriculum is rich, broad and balanced. Care is taken to ensure that pupils have access to all subjects across the curriculum.
- Pupils' excellent personal development is in part due to a curriculum that strongly contributes to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In lessons and in assemblies, the promotion of British values such as democracy and the rule of law prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Teachers work closely together to review the curriculum, ensuring that it meets pupils' needs and interests. It is much enhanced by a range of visits across the local region, residential experiences and visitors to the school. It is extremely well supported by after-school and lunchtime clubs that involve areas such as coding, sewing, reading, various sports, 'mad science', cooking, books, films and 'eco-warriors'.
- Leaders have carefully managed pupil premium funding to provide targeted support for pupils through additional members of staff, including a psychotherapist. In addition, funding has covered the cost of visits to inspire learning across the curriculum. There are also targeted programmes of support and a free breakfast club. The positive impact of these actions is clearly seen through the good progress made by disadvantaged pupils across the school, including the most able disadvantaged pupils.
- Links with parents are very good, with many making positive comments through the school's own questionnaire. Parents appreciate the many improvements seen and regularly take part in school events such as 'Stay and Play', 'Glue and Glitter' and 'Stay and Pray'. Parents know that the school promotes equality of opportunity for all, and does not tolerate discrimination of any kind.
- The physical education and sports funding for schools has been used very well. A sports coach is employed to lead activities every lunchtime, and teachers have benefited from professional development opportunities. A much larger proportion of pupils access sports clubs, and staff confidence about teaching physical education has

risen.

- The school has benefited from good support from the local authority, with the education partner visiting a number of times a year.

Governance of the school

- Governance has improved greatly since the previous inspection, partly as a result of the appointment of some new governors. Governors are passionate about school improvement and have appropriate professional skills that complement their role in school. They have an accurate and incisive understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses from first-hand experience in monitoring school performance alongside school leaders, which enables them to test the excellent detailed, accurate information they receive from the headteacher.
- Governors provide rigorous challenge to leaders alongside effective support. Leaders are held to account for the quality of teaching and learning, as well as the quality of outcomes for pupils seen in assessment data. They are adept at helping to set priorities for the school, and are clear about how they can develop their own effectiveness as a governing body.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school has a tangible ethos that is overwhelmingly positive and caring, putting the welfare of each pupil at the centre of all that it does. This is clearly seen in the friendly, happy and confident manner of the pupils in St Vincent's RC Primary School.
- All staff receive regular training, including teachers, administrative staff, teaching assistants and lunchtime staff. As a result, all staff, when asked, were able to tell inspectors what they would do should they have any concerns about a child.
- The excellent work of the school's psychotherapist enables pupils to speak about any area of worry or upset, enabling the leaders to be vigilant should any safeguarding issue arise.
- All documentation meets requirements and is thorough, up to date and complete, with many examples of extremely good practice.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is now consistently good, and its quality is much improved since the last inspection. The impact of teaching on learning, including reading, writing and mathematics, is reflected in the good rates of progress pupils now make in each year group, and the large proportion of pupils working at the expected standard at the end of each key stage. Rates of progress are continuing to accelerate.
- Lessons are usually interesting and lively, capturing pupils' interest and engagement. For example, pupils in Year 6 were able to produce an informative fact sheet about the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry the Eighth. This was because the teacher structured the lesson so that pupils could use their sound historical knowledge, high-level English skills, photographs and a model of a church altar to assist them.

- Teachers use good subject knowledge and structure learning effectively. Resources are extremely well prepared and engaging, including slides for the interactive whiteboard. For example, in Year 5, good use was made of short film clips as an introduction to writing from a character's viewpoint. This resulted in pupils writing with enthusiasm and interest.
- Work is usually pitched well according to pupils' abilities, providing the right amount of challenge to move learning forward. Occasionally, some tasks set by teachers are not challenging enough, especially for the most able pupils.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils, and usually ensure that the pace of learning and level of challenge allow all to succeed. Occasionally, the pace of learning in some lessons slows, and pupils lose concentration and can become disengaged, and they produce little work in this time.
- In mathematics, basic skills are taught well and consolidated regularly. Work in books, including curriculum books, shows that a range of areas across the mathematical curriculum, such as measurement, shape and space, are taught regularly, in addition to number and calculation. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils were successfully inserting mathematical symbols such as greater than, less than and 'equals' into number sentences. In Year 5, pupils were solving complex problems involving prime numbers, using mathematical vocabulary well.
- Pupils write with imagination and enthusiasm, often because their writing is linked to the topic they are studying or a book they are reading. Pupils in Year 4 were studying a poem about Kielder Water, which was part of their topic, to identify some key features of poetry.
- Reading and the teaching of phonics are carefully developed from the early years into key stage 1 and, as a result, pupils get off to a fast start in their reading. Pupils from Years 1 and 6 were keen to read to an inspector, and both the least and most able pupils read with some fluency. Most pupils read regularly at home.
- Teaching assistants are highly skilled, and are deployed very effectively to give timely and constructive support to individuals and groups of pupils.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils show enormous respect and care for others. They value their classmates' opinions, and work happily, cooperatively and enthusiastically in lessons. Attitudes to school and to learning are excellent.
- Pupils thrive in the positive, well-ordered and caring school environment. The sporting, curricular and artistic opportunities offered by the school mean that pupils' physical and emotional well-being are very well promoted.
- Pupils report that they feel very safe at all times. Year 6 pupils take great pride in being a 'buddy' to a child in Reception, with one stating that 'the joy of looking after someone makes you feel wanted.' They also report that the school is an exceptionally safe place to be and are fully aware of e-safety.

- Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural awareness is exceptionally well developed at St Vincent's. During the inspection, Year 5 pupils took part in a 'Mini Vinnie' liturgy, before embarking on their year-long fund-raising venture to support those less fortunate than themselves.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Staff set high standards to which pupils respond well. Most pupils' behaviour in the playground, in the dining hall and as they move around school is very good.
- Pupils are polite, courteous and display excellent manners.
- Pupils are keen to succeed and the vast majority work hard in class. Occasionally, some pupils can lose concentration and unnecessary chatter distracts others.
- The school has worked hard to improve attendance, for example through their use of 'Winits', small prizes awarded for attending school regularly, and the rates of attendance have improved significantly since the last inspection. Attendance is now broadly average, and only a very small number of pupils are persistently absent.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Progress and attainment have improved since the last inspection. Pupils are making consistently good progress in English and mathematics, as well as in other subjects across the curriculum.
- Pupils start Year 1 with skills and knowledge that are broadly in line with those that can be expected for their age. Achievement has improved since the last inspection, and pupils are making consistently good progress in Years 1 and 2. Pupils have again achieved well in the national phonics check in Year 1, with the proportion meeting the expected standard being above average.
- Progress is accelerating quickly across key stage 2. In unvalidated published data, pupils' progress from Years 3 to 6 was rapid, with a large proportion making more-than-expected progress. Current pupils are now making at least good progress in their learning from their individual starting points, and a very large proportion are working at the expected standard for their age.
- The progress of most-able pupils matches that of their classmates and is at least good. Currently, there is no available data to compare their progress against all pupils nationally with similar starting points. Most activities are planned to provide appropriate challenge, but the progress of the most able pupils could be even faster if activities consistently stretched their learning and understanding.
- As a result of the highly effective and innovative use of the pupil premium funding, disadvantaged pupils in each class make good progress in English and mathematics. This includes the most able disadvantaged pupils. The difference between their performance and that of all pupils nationally is diminishing rapidly.
- The school is quick to identify any pupils who are at risk of falling behind. Staff make effective provision for these pupils, including pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils all make good progress from their starting points

because teachers provide activities that are well matched to their needs and abilities.

Early years provision

Good

- Children are eager to learn and explore. They enjoy the opportunities given to investigate and learn happily together. Reception children's play is lively and imaginative.
- The school works hard to ensure that transition into the Reception class is smooth, as children arrive from at least three different nurseries or pre-school settings. The success of their efforts is seen in the calm and settled learning environment.
- The vast majority of children start the early years with skills and knowledge which are below those typical for their age. As a result of good teaching and provision, careful observation and good questioning, children make good progress and are well prepared to start Year 1. The proportion of children who leave Reception with a good level of development is improving year on year, and is broadly average. Although children's progress is good, children are not yet making consistently high rates of progress across the early years.
- Children's behaviour is consistently good as a result of the high expectations of adults. Children quickly learn essential social and emotional skills and are generally able to take turns, share and apply themselves to tasks. Occasionally, some boys' play is a little boisterous.
- Adults observe children carefully and build on their interests, using questions well to stimulate their imagination and curiosity. Adults lead activities extremely well, and ably support and work alongside children during imaginative and creative play sessions. They carefully support their learning through prompts, skilful questioning and by using rich language.
- Accurate assessment of children's learning is used well to design and plan lessons to capture children's interests and build upon existing knowledge and skills.
- Basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics are promoted effectively, and children get off to a good start in their learning. Every opportunity is taken to help children to write, make marks and count. The class teacher aided children's understanding of repeated coloured patterns very well through demonstrating the task and asking well-targeted questions.
- Early reading skills are developed extremely well through the good and systematic teaching of phonics. Following a session on the letter 'o', children were able to read and recognise that letter sound around the classroom, and form the letter using playdough.
- Leaders are vigilant in all aspects of safety and safeguarding children's welfare. Judging by the confidence and fun with which the children play and learn, they clearly feel very safe and secure.
- Links with parents are very strong, enhanced by an online assessment tool which sends comments and photographs to individual parents, and gives them the opportunity to respond.

- The experienced and skilful leader of the early years has accurately identified key areas for improvement. The early years team constantly refines its practice in order to drive forward the highest standards of teaching in the Reception class. There is a discernible sense of drive and urgency to offer the best possible provision for the children, and to see them thrive.

School details

Unique reference number	108514
Local authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	10019728

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michael Willcock
Headteacher	Angela Ness
Telephone number	01912 655 049
Website	www.stvincentsprimary.com
Email address	admin@stvincents.newcastle.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24–25 September 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- St Vincent's RC Primary School is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium funding is above average.
- The early years provision is full time in the Reception class.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in lessons, including one lesson observed jointly with the headteacher. In addition, an inspector listened to some pupils from Years 1 and 6 read, and reviewed a sample of pupils' work alongside the headteacher.
- The inspectors held meetings with governors, the headteacher, deputy headteacher, acting deputy headteacher, other members of the teaching staff and a representative of the local authority. They also held meetings with some pupils from the school council.
- The inspectors viewed a range of documents, including information on pupils' achievements over time, the school's data on recent and current progress of pupils and the school's view on how well it is doing. Inspectors also reviewed the school development plan, documents relating to safeguarding and records of behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors took account of the comments made by parents online. There were no responses to the online inspection questionnaire for staff or the online pupils' questionnaire. The school's website was also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Phil Scott, Lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Alison Aitchison

Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2016