

St Joseph's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School

Rutland Street, Sunderland, SR46HY

Inspection dates 21-22 November 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- The progress pupils make varies between year groups and subjects and is not consistently good.
- Teaching across the school is not consistently good.
- The most-able pupils are not always challenged in lessons to enable them to reach their full potential.
- The teaching of work in topics does not ensure pupils fully develop their skills and understanding in a broad range of subjects other than English, mathematics, science and Religious Education.
- Marking does not always inform pupils how they can improve their work. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to respond to the comments made by teachers.
- Middle leaders are not sufficiently involved in curriculum planning and monitoring to ensure pupils are able to make good progress.
- The checks made by leaders and managers are not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that the quality of teaching is ensuring pupils' good progress in all subjects.

The school has the following strengths

- Some teaching is good and better, especially in Years 5 and 6.
- Standards in English and mathematics are well above average by the end of Year 6.
- Attendance and punctuality are good. Pupils and parents have very positive attitudes towards school.
- Pupils feel safe and enjoy coming to school. Parents are fully supportive of the school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social education is a strength.
- There are strong positive relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils say that bullying is rare.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 20 lessons, including a joint observation with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with a number of groups of pupils, and inspectors listened to pupils read and discussed their reading with them.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, middle leaders and teachers, representatives of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation provided by the school including the school's own performance data and analysis, the school improvement plan, records of monitoring of the quality of teaching and pupils' work, as well as attendance, safeguarding and behaviour records.
- Pupils' work was analysed in relation to progress being made, the quality of marking and the breadth of the curriculum.
- The inspectors considered 18 responses to questionnaires completed by staff. Twelve responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were also considered.

Inspection team

Mark Lovell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sonya Williamson

Additional Inspector

Patrick Hargreaves

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a slightly above average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, supported through school action is slightly below average. The proportion supported through school action plus is well below average. There are no pupils with statements of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in order to ensure there are no inconsistencies in achievement between subjects, year groups and groups of pupils within school by:
 - ensuring that all teachers use the knowledge they have from assessing pupils' work to plan and teach lessons that match the needs of all pupils in their class
 - ensuring teachers regularly set challenging targets for all pupils
 - raising teachers' expectations of the amount and quality of work in pupils' topic books so that it is continually high.
- Provide more breadth to the curriculum to ensure there is effective coverage of all subjects by:
 - ensuring sufficient time is allowed for pupils to learn the skills and develop their understanding of subjects other than English, mathematics, science and Religious Education
 - developing further the topic-based curriculum to ensure it encompasses all subjects
 - developing the curriculum to include more lessons about the risk of extremism in modern society, the many forms bullying takes and how to keep safe in a range of circumstances.
- Improve the impact of the school's leadership, management and governance on pupils' performance by:
 - developing the improvement planning within school, ensuring it closely matches the information from monitoring, to raise standards in all subjects and for all groups of pupils
 - using the outcomes of more regular checks on teaching to develop teaching strategies that ensure pupils are challenged and motivated so that they want to learn as much as they can
 - regularly checking what is taught and ensuring that adequate time is spent on the wider curriculum so that all subjects are fully covered
 - developing the leadership roles of middle managers so that they have a greater part to play in checking on teaching and learning across the curriculum and use this knowledge to drive forward improvements, especially in those subjects taught through topics.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- From their individual starting points, pupils do not make consistently good progress in Nursery, Key Stage 1 and early Key Stage 2. This is because the overall quality of teaching is not always good and learning opportunities are not always well matched to pupils' needs.
- Achievement requires improvement because the rate of progress in different classes and year groups is too variable. In some classes, progress is much slower than in others. Progress and achievement in all subjects are also too variable, with progress in subjects other than English, mathematics, science and Religious Education being below that expected.
- The quantity of topic work produced by pupils is limited and its quality below expectations. Pupils are provided with insufficient opportunities to produce this work. There is a focus on fact-based work and insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop a variety of learning skills in their work.
- Pupils who are to be eligible for the pupil premium achieve standards that are above those seen nationally for similar pupils. The use of additional funding to reduce teaching group sizes and to provide specific additional teaching has led to progress that has been better than expected for these pupils. There is no gap between the attainment of those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and that of others throughout the school in English and mathematics and they make similar progress to other pupils supported by the pupil premium.
- The most-able pupils generally make expected progress. They are, however, not sufficiently challenged to ensure they make the best progress they could. The work set by teachers does not always match the needs of this group.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs do not make the same progress as other children in the school, achieving slightly below those expected nationally.
- Pupils known to be from minority ethnic groups, including those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress and are making better progress than other pupils in the school.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity effectively for pupils supported by the pupil premium but not as well for the most able and between different classes.
- Children start the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills generally below those typical for their age. Their progress in the nursery is slow but it is more rapid during the Reception Year.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have reached standards slightly above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' progress across Key Stage 2 is variable. As a result of the more rapid progress made in Year 5 and 6, standards at the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics are well above average. However, pupils' overall achievement still requires improvement.
- Progress in other subjects is less strong. The time spent on topic work does not allow pupils to develop fully their skills and understanding in a broad range of subjects, other than English, mathematics, science and Religious Education.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching over time is too variable across the school. Where teaching requires improvement, the tasks set for pupils are not well enough matched to their needs. At times, pupils are insufficiently challenged both when they are taught together as a group and when they work independently.
- Opportunities for pupils to develop their independent learning skills are sometimes restricted. Some lessons offer little opportunity for pupils to work together, learning from each other and consolidating their learning.
- There is some good and outstanding teaching across the school but there is too much that

requires improvement. In one successful Year 2 lesson, all pupils were highly motivated by the opportunities offered to explore the use of adjectives. The teacher's skilful use of time ensured there was sufficient opportunity for pupils to reinforce their learning and understanding by allowing pupils to talk with and to challenge each other. The teaching assistant enhanced learning by directly supporting a pupil with specific needs. Good progress was made because all pupils were fully involved in their learning which matched their needs well.

- The teaching of topic work requires improvement because insufficient time is allowed for pupils to learn the skills and develop their understanding of subjects taught through this method. The evidence from pupils' workbooks shows a lack of quality and quantity of topic work.
- The marking of pupils' work, although regular, varies in its quality and usefulness to pupils. There are examples of marking that provide pupils with clear guidance about how to improve their work, although pupils do not always respond to this.
- Teachers do not always use the knowledge they gain when marking pupils' work to plan the next lesson.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is good and they welcome visitors warmly.
- Pupils have good relationships with teachers and with each other and show respect and care.
- Pupils understand the expectations regarding their behaviour and there is a very calm atmosphere in the school.
- In the playground, pupils play and get on well together. They are supported by an appropriate number of adults and there are few instances of behaviour falling below expectations.
- There are few cases of bullying, pupils, however, feel safe and state that any bullying is dealt with quickly and effectively. Although pupils were able to talk about bullying and staying safe, this aspect of the curriculum has not been sufficiently taught. The school council had led peer learning about bullying but not all aspects have been covered.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance and punctuality are good. They appreciate what the school offers them and one pupil commented, 'The school building is new, safe, and warm in the winter, we love it.'

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management are not yet good because the quality of teaching and pupils' progress varies too much between classes and subjects, and the curriculum is not broad enough.
- Overall, the checks made on teaching and pupils' performance are less frequent and rigorous than they might be in subjects other than English and mathematics. The headteacher and senior leaders though, are addressing weaknesses in teaching by providing effective training, support and advice.
- Currently, middle leaders have less involvement than they might in checking on teaching and pupils' achievement, and this contributes to underperformance in some of the subjects taught through topic work.
- The curriculum focuses heavily on English, mathematics, science and Religious Education, but too little on other subjects. This imbalance results in pupils' good outcomes in English and mathematics especially by the end of Year 6, but underperformance in other subjects. There is also scope for the curriculum to promote pupils' cultural development and their awareness of different types of bullying more effectively.
- In addition to tackling weaknesses in teaching, leaders demonstrate their capacity to improve the school's performance in other ways. For example, they have ensured that pupils' standards in English and mathematics remain well above average by the end of Year 6, that there is consistently good or better teaching in Years 5 and 6, and that pupils' spiritual, moral and social

development, behaviour and attendance are all good.

- The headteacher and the governing body have a clear understanding of what needs improving and how to do this. However, plans for improvement do not always reflect the information gained from leaders' checks on performance.
- The local authority provides a 'light touch' approach to support the school and offers effective support for the headteacher.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has recently undergone many changes in membership including the Chair of the Governing Body.
 - The governing body is provided with detailed data on pupils' performance by the headteacher. Governors have a good understanding of this. Governors have an appropriate understanding of the performance management information they receive and decisions about how teachers' pay is linked to this. Governors are knowledgeable about the use of the pupil premium but are less sure about the impact this is having on the achievement of those eligible pupils. The Primary School Sport funding has not yet been discussed by the governing body.
 - The governing body ensures that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

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	108841
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	425934

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	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	274
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Patricia Napier
Headteacher	Mrs Maureen Galbraith
Date of previous school inspection	7 October 2008
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