

St Joseph and St Bede Catholic Primary School

Danesmoor Drive, Bury, Lancashire, BL9 6ER

Inspection dates 29–30 January 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- This is a caring school where all groups of pupils achieve well because teaching is good and sometimes outstanding.
- Teaching is well planned. Lessons are interesting with a wide variety of learning activities.
- The school has improved considerably since the previous inspection due to the headteacher's strong leadership.
- Leadership and management, including that of the governors, are good and managers at all levels work well together and regularly check how well pupils are learning and being taught.
- Good quality spiritual, moral, and cultural development provides pupils with a rich variety of learning experiences and as a result, they behave well and are polite, helpful and reflective.
- Pupils make good progress as they move through the school and consistently achieve above average standards in mathematics and English at the end of Year 6.
- Children who enter the Early Years Foundation Stage receive a good start to their education, as a result of the stimulating teaching and high levels of care they receive.
- Pupils feel very safe and secure and enjoy coming to school, with the result that they attend regularly.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding.
- Although progress in mathematics is good, it does not match that in reading and writing.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 lessons taught by 14 members of staff. Two lessons were carried out as joint observations with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with staff, pupils and members of the governing body. A meeting was also held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at its self-evaluation and its development plan. Additionally, records of pupils' progress, arrangements for safeguarding and documentation on the monitoring of teachers' performance were scrutinised.
- Inspectors analysed the 13 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors also spoke to parents as they visited the school and looked at the results of the school's own parental questionnaires.

Inspection team

Ray Biglin, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Elizabeth Fenwick

Additional Inspector

Jean O'Neill

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than most primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The majority of pupils are from a White British background.
- The school has International School and Leading Parent Partnership National awards.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching by:
 - ensuring the work given to the most able pupils is always hard enough
 - making sure that pupils make full use of the advice for improvement given in their marked work.

- Raise achievement in mathematics to that of English by:
 - increasing the opportunities for solving mathematical problems and using calculations in other subjects pupils study, not just in mathematics
 - all teachers helping pupils to become more involved in assessing their work in mathematics lessons in order to plan for the next steps in their learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- When children enter the nursery, they do so with skills and abilities below those which would be expected for their age, particularly in speaking and listening. As a result of consistently good teaching, children make good progress and by the end of their time in the Reception class are working at the same level as similar children nationally.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are enthusiastic and confident learners. Good use is made of the outside area, for example, when children were excitedly making cake balls and hanging them in the trees in order to watch the birds feed.
- Throughout the school, pupils clearly enjoy their lessons and find them interesting and stimulating; for instance, when Year 1 pupils were dressed as pirates and working together to add and subtract the amount of gold and jewels they had plundered.
- Pupils continue to make good progress as they move through the school and leave Year 6 having achieved above average standards in mathematics and well above average standards in English. Many pupils make more than expected progress in English but fewer do so in mathematics.
- Pupils are confident readers, who read fluently and with expression. They enjoy reading, both at school and at home, and at the end of Year 6 attain standards that are well above the national average.
- The school works effectively to promote equality of opportunity and as a result, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, as well as those supported by the pupil premium, make as good progress as their classmates. The standards achieved by pupils known to be eligible for free school meals are higher than those achieved by similar pupils nationally, and are close to those of the other pupils in the school. They also make similarly good progress as all other pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching, including that of English and mathematics, is typically good and some outstanding teaching was observed. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are making good progress.
- Throughout the school, teachers and pupils work well together. Teachers expect their pupils to work hard and pupils are keen to do their best. Teachers plan their lessons effectively and in the best lessons, work is always carefully matched to pupils' individual needs. However, sometimes the work given to the most able pupils does not challenge them to make the best possible progress.
- Pupils are encouraged to work things out for themselves and help one another to learn. They are also encouraged to explore different ways of finding an answer when they are finding the work difficult, other than by asking the teacher. For example, in lessons certain pupils are 'subject experts' and there to help others.
- Reading is well taught and from the start teachers are skilled in helping children quickly develop their skills in learning and letters and sounds. From an early age, children are excited by reading; for example, two children enthusiastically shared and enjoyed a story about a polar bear. This love of reading continues throughout pupils' time in the school and the school provides books which interest even reluctant readers.
- Pupils' books are well marked by their teachers. There are comments that both praise hard work and suggest what pupils could do to improve. Although pupils are encouraged to respond to the advice given, they do not always do this and therefore opportunities to improve their work are missed.
- Pupils are regularly given targets to help them improve their work. However, teachers could sometimes involve pupils more in checking whether they have reached that target and if so, to identify and plan what they need to do to be challenged further. Throughout the school, there is

a good variety of resources available to help pupils learn, and teachers ensure that their classrooms are welcoming, with stimulating displays of pupils' work. Information and communication technology is used particularly well, for example, when teaching assistants use hand-held recording devices to help pupils organise and articulate their thoughts.

- The school employs a number of well-trained teaching assistants who skilfully and sensitively help pupils who need extra support, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those for whom pupil premium funding is provided. This is particularly evident in reading, writing and mathematics.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is typically good, both in classrooms and around the school. The school is a harmonious one and pupils fully understand the importance of good behaviour. They are courteous and helpful, and regularly asked the members of the inspection team if they were enjoying visiting their school.
- Pupils are keen to help one another and the whole school is very inclusive and a place where every pupil really does matter. At lunchtimes, older pupils organise games for younger pupils and make sure that no one is left out.
- The school recognises the importance of pupils having a positive attitude to one another by awarding 'Peace Ambassador' status to those pupils demonstrating acts of kindness to one another.
- The vast majority of parents and pupils agree that behaviour is good and that if there are any incidents of inappropriate behaviour, they are dealt with quickly. There is a behaviour management system in place, which is clearly understood by pupils and consistently applied by staff.
- There are few instances of bullying but pupils are fully confident that the staff take any such occurrences seriously and, therefore, feel safe, secure and well cared for. They understand the different kinds of bullying, including cyber and homophobic bullying, and know how to deal with them appropriately.
- Attendance is average and pupils are rarely away for any significant length of time.

The leadership and management are good

- Strong leadership from the headteacher and other senior leaders has led to teaching at the school being good and sometimes outstanding. As a result, pupils achieve well over time, particularly in English.
- Those leaders with specific responsibilities for subjects work effectively to improve achievement for all pupils. They regularly check how well pupils are doing and use the information gleaned to help teachers improve the progress of their pupils. New leadership for mathematics has resulted in a marked recent improvement in pupils' progress.
- The school has worked successfully to build good relationships with parents. Regular newsletters ensure that parents are well informed and the school holds regular parents' events, such as an evening to help them understand their child's work in mathematics. As one parent wrote, 'the school is always there to help, no matter what.' Such good practice reflects the school's national award for its partnership with parents.
- The arrangements for checking how well staff are performing and for the training of staff are thorough and clearly linked to what the school and individuals need to do to improve. The members of the governing body are fully involved in this process and together with the headteacher, make sure that teachers successfully meet any targets set before they move up the pay scale.
- The pupil premium is used well to ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to do well.

The school has used this extra funding in a variety of ways, but mainly to provide extra staff to help pupils who are struggling with their basic skills.

- The way in which the school organises the subjects which pupils study is broad and balanced and uses a themed approach to enthuse pupils. For example, pupils study the Victorians and use this as a springboard for writing fiction for which the school was awarded a prize by the 'Dickens Society'.
- The school is presently reviewing the way all subjects are taught, because it understands the importance of providing more opportunities for pupils to practise their mathematical problem-solving and calculating skills in lessons other than mathematics.
- The school makes an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are many opportunities for pupils to take part in sporting and cultural activities and there are strong links with the church. Pupils learn to reflect on the lives of others. An excellent example of this is the school's links with Thailand and Gambia, which have resulted in an outstanding International School award.
- The local authority has supported the school well since the last inspection. The school has a good working relationship with the school effectiveness partner, who has helped support the improvements made in teaching and in pupils' progress.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a clear understanding of how the school is performing compared with similar schools and as a result, are providing a good level of challenge to school leaders. For example, they fully understand that the priority for the school is to make sure that pupils achieve as well in mathematics as they do in English. School finances are well managed and the governing body has checked on how effectively the extra funding provided by the pupil premium has been used to help pupils improve their basic skills. Governors are instrumental in checking on the performance of teachers and that this is linked to pay. The governing body ensures that the school is a safe and secure place for pupils and that all statutory safeguarding requirements are met.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 105336 |
| Local authority | Bury |
| Inspection number | 400776 |

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

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| 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 | 360 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mary McGrail |
| Headteacher | Elizabeth Connolly |
| Date of previous school inspection | 1 July 2010 |
| Telephone number | 0161 764 3781 |
| Fax number | 0161 764 3957 |
| Email address | StJosephStBede@bury.gov.uk |

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