

St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School, Pickering

Swainsea Lane, Pickering, North Yorkshire, YO18 8AR

Inspection dates

5–6 February 2014

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

- Overtime, pupils do not make consistently good progress. Consequently, pupils do not always reach the levels of which they are capable by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Teaching requires improvement because teachers do not always provide work that challenges pupils to accelerate their progress, particularly the most able.
- Mathematics teaching does not build on pupils' existing skills to move their learning forward quickly and effectively.
- Ongoing changes to leadership and staff at all levels have, until recently, hampered the school's efforts to drive improvement quickly.
- Some subject leaders do not have the skills necessary to check on the quality of teaching and learning in their subject to ensure that progress is good or better.
- Marking does not have enough emphasis on helping pupils to do better in future work, particularly in writing.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well and is at the heart of all the school does.
- Pupils' behaviour is good in and around school. Pupils say they feel safe at school and are cared for well.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium make good progress as a result of the additional support they receive.
- The acting headteacher, governors, local authority and diocesan personnel are now working effectively in partnership to ensure pupils' education is improving despite the recent staffing issues.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed nine lessons, including whole lessons and parts of lessons.
- The inspector listened to pupils reading in lessons and looked at their work and at a range of other evidence, including displays, the school's website and evidence representing the school's wider achievements beyond the classroom.
- Documentation about pupils' progress, teaching and planning was analysed. The school's documents on safeguarding were scrutinised together with records of attendance and pupils' behaviour.
- The inspector spoke to many pupils both individually and in groups.
- The 19 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were considered. The inspector also looked at the school's own surveys.
- The views expressed by 10 staff who returned a questionnaire were also considered.
- Discussions were held with various members of staff and representatives from the governing body, the local authority and parents.

Inspection team

Angela Shaw, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than most primary schools.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. No pupil is currently at an early stage of learning English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs 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 school has experienced significant changes in its leadership and staffing since the previous inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Secure teaching that is at least good, so that pupils always reach the levels of which they are capable by:
 - ensuring that all staff make full use of assessment information to provide work that challenges pupils of different abilities and in particular the most able
 - making sure that mathematics teaching builds on pupils' skills and moves these forward at a rapid pace to lift their achievement
 - marking pupils' work so that it more readily helps pupils improve their work, particularly in promoting pupils' more accurate spelling and punctuation.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of leaders and managers by:
 - ensuring current changes in key roles are completed urgently
 - making sure that all subject leaders become experienced in monitoring their subjects so that they can provide helpful feedback to colleagues, especially about pupils' learning and progress
 - improving the systems for checking up on pupils' progress and rapidly identifying individuals and groups of pupils at risk of underachieving.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- In 2013, standards at the end of Year 6 were broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. However, variations in the rates of progress mean that not enough pupils make consistently good progress overtime. Consequently, the levels they reach at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 are not as high as they should be from their starting points.
- Although pupils often have very positive attitudes to learning, inconsistencies in the quality of teaching hold back their progress. Learning is not always planned tightly enough to ensure pupils acquire and apply their skills at a fast rate, more significantly for the most able.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills typical for their age. They have good attitudes to learning. However, a wide range of challenging and worthwhile activities are not always provided, both indoors and outdoors, which results in children making only expected progress, particularly the most able.
- Pupils who receive additional support from the pupil premium funding, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, make good progress and often better progress than their peers. As a result, the gap between their attainment and other pupils in the school is narrowing.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make broadly similar progress to their classmates and that of their peers nationally.
- Pupils make steady rather than rapid progress particularly in mathematics. As a result, few pupils in the school attained higher than expected levels last year in mathematics. Additional support, particularly in Years 5 and 6, is starting to have a positive effect. However, pupils are not always challenged sufficiently in mathematics lessons.
- Senior leaders have successfully focused on the teaching of writing, including providing more regular opportunities for pupils to complete longer pieces of work. As a result, attainment in this subject at both Key Stages 1 and 2 improved in 2013. However, senior leaders are aware that still more needs to be done, for example, for some pupils, especially boys, the quality of written work is often hampered by weak spelling and punctuation which is not addressed by teachers' marking.
- Most pupils read competently, understand what they are reading and have a secure knowledge of the techniques they can use to work out the pronunciation of unfamiliar words. Boys especially are enjoying the wider choice of reading books the school now has to offer including non-fiction and science fiction books.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not good enough overtime to ensure all pupils achieve well. Pupils, including the most able, are not always challenged well enough to make their best possible progress.
- Questioning is used well to help pupils make links with things they have learnt before. However, mathematics teaching does not always move beyond consolidating previous learning. This does not move pupils' skills and understanding forward quickly enough. Work in pupils' books shows that pupils have not been given sufficient time to practise what they have been taught or to work things out for themselves.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly. However, while appropriately praising or correcting work, marking is less helpful in giving pupils specific advice about how to improve.
- Across the school there are positive relationships between staff and pupils. Routines for moving around the classroom and use of resources are clear in all classes. Teachers have good subject knowledge and explain work clearly.
- The most successful learning is well planned. Here, teachers demonstrate a clear view of the skills they expect pupils to have developed or acquired by the end of the lesson. Resources are

used carefully to ensure pupils achieve their targets for improvement. Good questioning is very effective in enabling individual pupils to clarify or expand their ideas and thereby, to support their classmates learning. This was seen in a Year 3 and 4 literacy lesson, where groups of pupils were writing and delivering their own persuasive radio broadcasts for the sale of spy equipment.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This contributes well to the school's caring and orderly community. Pupils are included in everything the school has to offer. Pupils are extremely polite and have good manners.
- They are keen to learn, but this enthusiasm is not always harnessed by effective teaching to extend pupils' learning. They say that there is very little poor behaviour around the school. School records and discussions with parents, staff, governors and pupils, show that behaviour is typically good.
- Pupils enjoy each other's company, share ideas readily and play well with each other. They appreciate the contribution of the Years 5 and 6 sports leaders at break times in helping them to feel safe and join in a range of fun games.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe and say there is very little bullying. They know about the different types of bullying, such as cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying. They feel well supported at school and are confident that problems get sorted out. One pupil commented 'it's just like being in one big family, we all look after each other'. This view is supported by parents. School documents and records show that the school works well with external agencies and parents to support the various needs of individual pupils, especially in welfare and safeguarding matters.
- Attendance has improved in the last two years and is now at national average. The school has worked successfully to improve attendance by the use of incentives, such as 100% attendance awards. Pupils arrive for school on time.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The acting headteacher has led the school with conviction, establishing a calm and positive atmosphere in an unsettled period. He values the good support provided by the local authority to establish more rigorous school systems and structures and through the work of consultants to help improve the quality of teaching. These now place the school on a firm footing to move forward. Staff and parents are positive about the current leadership arrangements.
- There has been a high turnover of staff in the last year. Some subject leaders are new in post. Subsequently, the skills of these leaders are not yet fully developed, which limits their effectiveness in supporting other staff and the rigour with which they check on the progress of pupils in their subjects.
- Half-termly reviews of pupils' progress are used to provide leaders with a clear understanding of how much progress pupils are now making. Overall, they have not been used well enough to ensure that teachers plan work which enables all pupils to reach the standards of which they are capable. However, inspection evidence indicates improvement in their use recently.
- School leaders closely monitor the impact of the pupil premium funding. This is now contributing effectively to the better learning and progress for qualifying pupils across the school.
- The additional sports funding for primary schools has been spent suitably in widening opportunities for pupils' participation in team sports and developing more opportunities for sport after school. Pupils were very appreciative of the opportunity to take part in the new judo club. Specialist training has also been provided for staff to help them develop their skills in delivering sport.
- Pupils experience a varied curriculum enriched by a range of educational visits and visitors.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well through lessons and enrichment activities, contributing to their good behaviour.

■ Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are working well with the local authority and diocese to support the acting headteacher and to secure a permanent leadership structure for the school.
- Previously, governors have been too reliant on the school for information. However, through a new 'governor of the month' system of visits to the school, and by analysing performance data, they are becoming more informed about all aspects of the school's work which is enabling them to provide increasing challenge.
- Governors have sound procedures to ensure that targets are set for teachers, which are linked to pay and the management of performance. They know how and why the pupil premium funding is spent in particular ways and have examined with senior leaders its impact on the achievement and well-being of eligible pupils.
- They make sure the school's systems for safeguarding pupils are secure and meet current national requirements. Thorough checks are made before new staff are recruited.

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	121654
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	440865

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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	111
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Una Stewart
Acting Headteacher	David Harrison
Date of previous school inspection	8 February 2011
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