

# St Joseph's RC Primary School

Tower Street, Hartlepool, TS24 7HT

**Inspection dates** 20–21 March 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- Pupils' achievement is good. From well below average starting points, pupils in Year 6 reach standards that are above those expected for their age in reading and writing.
- Teaching is typically good and some is outstanding
- Behaviour is good. Pupils behave very well in lessons and around school. They are enthusiastic about their learning and try hard to do their best.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils are always polite and courteous and they take on responsibilities willingly and carry out their duties enthusiastically.
- This is a very caring school. Pupils say they feel very secure and know how to keep themselves safe.
- The headteacher's leadership is very effective and she is well supported by senior leaders. All staff have worked together with determination to raise pupils' achievement and to improve the quality of teaching in recent years.
- Members of the governing body are very effective and make a strong contribution to school improvement. They use their skills and expertise to help the school to improve.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although excellent practice is beginning to be shared, this has not yet ensured enough outstanding teaching across the school.
- The teaching of mathematics is not as strong as it is in reading and writing because pupils do not consolidate their basic mathematical skills at an early stage and do not have enough opportunities to use their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to make the improvements to their work suggested by their teachers when marking their books.
- Leaders at the middle level are new to their roles and they do not yet have the skills they need in using data to identify what needs to be improved.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 13 lessons. One lesson was observed jointly with the headteacher. They also listened to pupils read in Years 2 and 6.
- There were insufficient responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View) for the results to be published but inspectors considered 68 responses to the school's own parents' survey conducted during the inspection. They also considered 13 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors held a meeting with pupils in Year 6 and talked informally with pupils at break times and lunch times. The inspectors also talked to five members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. They held discussions with leaders at different levels including the leaders of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors observed the school at work and looked at a range of documentation, including internal and external information relating to pupils' progress, their workbooks, school improvement planning and the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its own performance. They also considered reports written by the local authority, documents relating to the management of teachers' performance, minutes of governing body meetings, safeguarding and child-protection documents.

## Inspection team

Peter Eeva, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Pauline Piddington

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is lower than 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 are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The majority of pupils are White British, The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups and for whom English is an additional language is average.
- The number of pupils who join the school other than at the usual times is above average.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding in order to raise achievement further, especially in mathematics and in Key Stage 1 by:
  - sharing the best practice evident in the school more consistently among all staff
  - providing pupils with planned opportunities to make the improvements suggested by their teachers when marking their work
  - ensuring that pupils consolidate their basic mathematical skills at an early stage
  - giving pupils opportunities to use their developing mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Develop the skills of middle leaders in using the data available to them to identify and plan improvements in their subject or area of responsibility.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in the Nursery in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities that are well below those typical for children of their age. They get off to a very good start. They settle in quickly as a result of the caring environment, the good teaching and the detailed knowledge that all adults have of individual children's needs. As a result, they leave the Reception Year well prepared for learning in Year 1.
- Programmes to develop reading skills help younger ones to make a good start to learning to read. Pupils in Year 2 read accurately and can decode new and difficult words with increasing confidence. The very good start is built on as they move through the school so that by the end of Year 6 pupils read very well.
- Pupils write well and with imagination and benefit from the range of interesting things to write about. They are able to match their writing styles to suit a range of audiences and purposes, whether it is travel guides for Year 2 pupils or formal letters to the headteacher for older pupils.
- Although achievement in mathematics is good, it is not as good as it is in reading and writing. In Key Stage 1, not enough time is taken to check that pupils are confident in using the basic skills that they have been taught, and so the foundations for later learning are not as secure as they should be. Throughout the school, pupils do not have regular opportunities to use their developing mathematical skills in other subjects.
- The school's own data and other inspection evidence shows that pupils throughout the school are making good progress and that pupils in Year 2 are on track to reach standards that are just above average in English and mathematics at the end of the year. Pupils in Year 6 are on track to reach standards that are above average in English and just above average in mathematics.
- Pupils who join the school after Year 1 are quickly assessed and then helped to catch up, and so they too make good progress.
- Pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and are supported by the pupil premium achieve at least as well as others in the school. School data shows that there are no gaps in their attainment and progress in English and mathematics compared with other pupils in the school. This is due to the very good quality of the extra help provided for them, such as learning in smaller groups.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is closely checked and reviewed regularly. Carefully planned support, based on detailed knowledge of individual pupils' needs, makes sure that these pupils make progress that is similar to that of others.
- The most able pupils make very good progress to reach standards that are above average in English and mathematics because of the high expectations of their teachers and because they are given work that challenges them. A number of pupils in Year 6 are working at a high level in English and mathematics.
- Equality of opportunity is central to the work of the school and the school is successful in removing any barriers to learning so that there are no differences in the achievement of different groups of pupils. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are given very well targeted support in developing their language skills so that they rapidly catch up with other pupils in the school.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The improved quality of teaching across the school has had a positive effect on pupils' learning and achievement, enabling them to make good progress.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are provided with a wide range of interesting indoor and outdoor activities which cover all areas of learning, especially those that assist in language development. Good attention is paid to developing children's speaking and listening

skills, which prepares them very well for the future.

- There are very good relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils work very well together in pairs and small groups when given the opportunity. Activities interest pupils and tasks are based on a good knowledge of pupils' different levels of ability.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and comments indicate where pupils have achieved success and point out where improvements could be made. However, not all teachers provide regular times for pupils to make these improvements before moving on to the next piece of work.
- In mathematics lessons, the skills that pupils need to make progress are generally taught effectively. However, in Key Stage 1, not enough time is taken to check that understanding is secure and that the skills taught can be used with confidence and so later learning is not secure and some pupils make mistakes with basic calculations. In all classes, pupils do not have regular opportunities to practise their developing mathematical skills in other subjects. As a result, the rate of progress is not as rapid as it is in English.
- Pupils, including the most able pupils, respond to their teachers' high expectations and typically try their hardest to rise to the challenges set for them. In a Year 6 class, for example, pupils worked enthusiastically to improve a piece of writing created by their teacher and so develop their own critical skills.
- Teaching assistants are deployed very well and carefully guide pupils' learning. They know pupils well and have a very clear picture of the needs of individual pupils, especially disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. It is good both in and out of lessons. The records kept by the school confirm that behaviour is typically of a high order.
- The school has an effective system for encouraging pupils to behave well. All teachers follow this system consistently, and pupils say that they know how to behave well and that they expect others to behave equally well.
- In the playground, pupils play happily with each other and appreciate the wide range of play equipment provided for them. During the inspection the successful netball team organised their own training session in preparation for an imminent tournament.
- Older pupils have roles of responsibility, such as stair monitors and playground friends. They take these very seriously and carry them out conscientiously.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe and parents agree that their children feel safe in school. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe including when using the internet.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare. They have a good understanding of different forms of bullying and are confident that if any bullying occurred it would be swiftly challenged by the staff.
- Attendance is average and has improved. The school is prompt in checking on the reasons for any absences. Pupils are encouraged to attend school regularly and on time.
- Pupils really enjoy the wide range of activities and clubs provided for them such as the research club and the gardening club. When asked what changes they would make to improve the school, most found it difficult to think of any significant changes they would make.
- Through the curriculum, pupils develop a good understanding of their own and different faiths and cultures and show respect and consideration for others. There are many opportunities for pupils to think about and express their feelings and to reflect on their learning and behaviour. This does much to promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding, which is a strong aspect of the school.

**The leadership and management are good**

- The school is well led by an effective and determined headteacher supported ably by an equally determined senior leadership team and by an effective governing body.
- There have been improvements in both pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching as a result of concerted action by the staff.
- Leaders at middle level are relatively new to their roles and, although their skills are developing as they become more experienced, these skills are not sharp enough to allow them to effectively use the information they have to identify what needs to be improved and to create the plans needed to make these improvements happen.
- The school has an accurate picture of its strengths and areas for development and produces effective plans to tackle these. Staff and governors play an important part in creating these plans and checking on the progress made.
- The headteacher carries out regular checks on the quality of teaching and learning, which provide an accurate view of its quality. Where improvements are needed, teachers are able to improve their skills through effective training. Awarding pay increases or promotion is only done when the rate of pupils' progress warrants it. However, although staff have some opportunities to observe outstanding practice this is not used enough as a means to ensure that all teaching improves to this high level.
- This is a very caring and inclusive school where all pupils are known and cared for as individuals. All pupils are able to access all that the school has to offer. Staff work hard to make sure that all groups of pupils do as well as they can, for example, in removing any gap in achievement between those pupils eligible for pupil premium funding and their peers and between those pupils who speak English as an additional language and other pupils in the school.
- Parents have a very positive view of the school. There were insufficient responses to the questionnaire on Parent View for the results to be published but the school's own survey carried out during the inspection indicated that the vast majority of pupils would recommend the school to other parents.
- The curriculum caters well for the individual needs of pupils, particularly in relation to developing their literacy skills. However, planning for mathematics does not help teachers provide chances for learning in mathematics to be included in other subjects. There are excellent opportunities for pupils to be involved in a range of additional activities and clubs, such as learning Spanish. Pupils appreciate the opportunities to go on educational visits and welcome visitors to the school.
- The primary school sports funding is used to promote pupils' physical development and extend sporting activities. Support is provided to enhance teachers' skills in teaching a range of sports and in providing additional sporting opportunities such as the extra swimming lessons.
- Safeguarding and child-protection procedures are effective and meet all current statutory requirements.
- The local authority has provided a much appreciated level of support since the previous inspection.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is effective and governors are determined to help the school to improve further. They are well-informed about all aspects of school life and have a good knowledge of the school, particularly about the comparative achievements of pupils through their analysis of national data. They monitor the school's performance and ask challenging questions to promote further development. Governors bring a range of skills, which they use to good effect in carrying out their roles. Where there are gaps in their knowledge and skills they make sure that they receive appropriate training. They are ambitious for the further development of the school and the achievement and welfare of its pupils. Governors are knowledgeable about the quality of teaching and are familiar with *Teachers' Standards* and use them to help manage teachers' performance and award pay increases for good teaching. They oversee the spending of pupil premium funding and are aware of the positive impact this is having on pupils' achievement. They are also involved in planning the spending of the primary school sports

funding and are considering how its impact on the physical well-being of pupils will be measured.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	111693
<b>Local authority</b>	Hartlepool
<b>Inspection number</b>	430884

This inspection of the school 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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	166
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dave Tindall
<b>Headteacher</b>	Margaret Hodgson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 May 2012
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