

All Saints Catholic Primary School

Chestnut Grove, Bootle, Merseyside, L20 4LX

Inspection dates 10–11 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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

- Pupils do not make consistently good progress across school. As a result standards by the end of Year 6 are not as high as they should be, particularly in writing.
- Teaching is not of a high enough quality to secure good progress for all pupils. Work planned for pupils is not always at the right level of difficulty, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Although there is some good practice, marking does not always help pupils to improve their work and not enough opportunities are given for pupils to respond to the guidance provided.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise and improve their writing skills in other subjects.
- Plans to improve teaching and pupils' achievement do not always make it clear how leaders will judge whether pupils' progress is good enough.
- Not all leaders are fully involved in checking on the quality of teaching and how well pupils are learning. This is hindering the effectiveness of their work.
- Teachers are not yet held fully to account for ensuring pupils make good progress.
- Although improving, the attendance of pupils remains below average.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and senior leaders have taken some robust action to bring about improvements. As a result teaching is improving and achievement is rising.
- Governors are well led, know the school thoroughly and successfully support and challenge leaders.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are supported effectively and make good progress from their low starting points.
- Pupils have positive relationships with the staff. They generally behave well in lessons and around school and feel secure and safe.
- Positive relationships exist with parents and the local community.
- The school works closely with the local authority and other schools to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons or parts of lessons and checked closely on pupils’ work in books, in lessons and on display around school. Inspectors also listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other members of the school staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors also met with some school governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work, including checks on how well it is doing, pupil progress data and the school improvement plan. They checked documents relating to child protection, safeguarding, and the attendance and behaviour of pupils. Inspectors also checked minutes of governing body meetings, reports by the local authority and the school website.
- Inspectors took account of 24 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), the school’s own surveys of the views of parents and brief informal meetings with parents before the start of the school day. Inspectors also considered the views of staff through discussions with them and through the 28 voluntary questionnaires that were completed.

Inspection team

Chris Maloney, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Anthony Buckley

Additional Inspector

Nina Heron

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- Pupils in Years 4 and 5 are taught in three mixed-age classes for this year only.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is well-above average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or 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 of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well-above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- There have been significant changes in staff and governors since the last inspection, including some senior leaders and the Chair of Governing Body.
- The school has a children's centre on site, which delivers most of its services from Seaforth Children's Centre, which is inspected separately. The school provides a breakfast club and a wide range of before- and after-school clubs. The school works closely with other schools, including some in other local authorities.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and increase pupils' progress, particularly in writing, so that all pupils achieve consistently well by:
 - making sure all teachers consistently plan work that is not too easy or too hard, particularly for the most able pupils
 - ensuring marking always provides pupils with precise guidance on how to improve their work in order to achieve their targets and that they have opportunities to show that they can
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to use and extend their writing skills in a range of subjects.
- Strengthen the impact of leadership and management at all levels by:
 - ensuring actions planned by leaders to improve the quality of teaching and learning have clear and measurable milestones that are used to check their impact on pupils' progress
 - ensuring all leaders with specific responsibilities have opportunities to check how well pupils are learning in order to take decisive actions to bring about improvement
 - ensuring more rigorous checks are made on how well teachers are working so that their pay progression is linked more closely to all pupils making good rather than expected progress
 - improving attendance still further, by building on the wide range of strategies already in place to ensure that all parents take responsibility for their children attending school on a regular basis.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- The achievement of pupils requires improvement because their progress is not consistently good and shows too much variability between classes and subjects. Pupils have not been reaching the standards they are capable of by the time they leave Year 6, particularly in writing.
- Children usually start the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are much lower than is typical for their age, especially in their personal development, reading, writing and mathematical skills. However, they make good and sometimes outstanding progress from their different starting points and are better prepared for starting in Year 1.
- Standards by the end of Year 2 rose sharply in 2013 although they remained significantly below average overall in reading, writing and mathematics. Not enough pupils reached the higher levels of attainment in writing or mathematics. Currently, attainment is closer to average, especially with more pupils reaching the level expected for their age although few reach the higher level.
- Although test results at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2013 were significantly below average in mathematics and writing, they had risen steeply, particularly in reading, which was closer to average. Not enough pupils made the progress expected of them or reached the higher Level 5 in mathematics and especially in writing.
- Checks on the work of current pupils in school and records of how well they are learning show that, although still inconsistent between years, the progress of pupils is improving and standards continue to rise particularly in Year 6. Attainment is now closer to average in mathematics, reading and writing because more leave school having reached what is expected for their age. There is also an increase in those reaching above average in reading and mathematics but less so in writing.
- Pupils enjoy reading and talk enthusiastically about favourite authors such as Roald Dahl. Standards in reading are rising sharply because of improvements to the teaching of reading and the success of closely targeted support for groups and individual pupils. In 2013, the proportion of pupils in Year 1 that reached the expected standard in the screening check of their understanding of the sounds that letters make was below the national average, but checks in Year 1 show standards are rising.
- Pupils' writing is improving more slowly and the written work of some of the most able pupils lacks the rich vocabulary and range of punctuation you would expect for their ability. This reflects the inconsistent guidance they are receiving from teachers on how to improve their work and the lack of opportunities they have to practise and develop their writing skills across subjects.
- Teaching gives more attention to increasing pupils' basic skills in mathematics and their confidence to apply their skills in solving problems is improving.
- The progress of the most able pupils requires improvement because teaching is not sufficiently challenging and they are not consistently given work that is demanding enough or stretches their thinking.
- Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are making the same erratic progress as others in school. Overall progress requires improvement but evidence shows this is improving due to the well targeted and good quality extra help they receive.
- In Year 6 in 2013, the standards reached by pupils supported by the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, were approximately six months behind similar pupils nationally overall. In school, these pupils were about a year behind other pupils in mathematics, eight months behind in reading and six months behind in writing. School data and the standard of work seen by inspectors, shows that gaps are closing rapidly and these pupils are now making similar progress to others in school.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Despite improvements since the last inspection, teaching has not been consistently good enough over time, especially in Key Stage 2. This is clearly evident in senior leaders' evaluations of the quality of teaching, observations during the inspection, work in pupils' books and the school's own records of pupils' progress.
- Teachers do not make enough use of what they know about how well pupils are learning to plan tasks that are suitably challenging to pupils of different abilities. A common problem is that the most able pupils often do not get down to harder work quickly enough or spend time on tasks that are too easy that do not challenge their thinking or stretch their abilities.
- Teachers regularly mark pupils' work and some comments are really useful to pupils on how to improve their work. However, this practice is not yet fully embedded across school and pupils are not always given the chance to show that they can follow the advice provided.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage learn well because of the good teaching they receive. Staff capture children's interests well and provide a caring and stimulating environment in which children thrive.
- The quality of teaching is now improving across school. Relationships between staff and pupils are strong. Staff take time to get to know the pupils as individuals and this boosts pupils' self-esteem well and builds mutual respect. A typical pupil comment was, 'All teachers are very supportive. I love to learn here.'
- Skilled teaching assistants support pupils' learning effectively, especially in reading where they have received good training alongside teachers.
- When learning is good and occasionally outstanding, staff and pupils share high expectations. Pupils are inspired to aim high and do their very best. Regular checks are made on how well pupils are learning and probing questions are asked that make pupils think hard and deepen their understanding. Pupils are moved on to harder work as soon as they are ready and no learning time is wasted.
- In Year 2, pupils were highly motivated because expectations were high and pupils eagerly shared ideas about what makes a good sentence and improved each other's writing about owls. As soon as they were ready, pupils of all abilities were challenged to use new punctuation and more interesting descriptions.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They enjoy school which is reflected in their eagerness to get to class after break times. As a result many attend regularly and attendance is improving although it is below average despite the school's endeavours.
- Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors. They were eager to speak to inspectors and tell us of their pride in their school and how much they enjoy working with their friends and solving problems. However, they were keen to tell inspectors how they do not like doing work that is too easy for them or being disturbed sometimes by pupils in class.
- Pupils get on well, play safely and co-operatively and show respect for other cultures and faiths. They enjoy the multi-faith weeks and opportunities to visit a mosque or synagogue. A typical pupil comment was, 'It's good to work with children from other cultures because you can learn so much about different beliefs and ways of life. We are all equal really.'
- They really enjoy school and opportunities they have to take on responsibility such as being a peer mediator or reading buddy. Pupils particularly enjoyed the residential trip to the Warrington Peace Centre.
- When tasks are too easy or too hard for them, some pupils lose interest and become distracted. This slows the progress pupils make.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe and show a good understanding about how to stay safe and the dangers posed by strangers. Older pupils know how to stay safe on the internet. A typical pupil comment was, 'Never give away personal

details.'

- Pupils show a good understanding of the different forms of bullying, such as cyber-bullying or bullying as a result of prejudice. They say it does happen sometimes but staff always sort it out fairly.
- Evidence from the school's own surveys and from the online Parent View shows that parents hold positive views on the standard of behaviour and safety in school.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because consistently good achievement and teaching over time have not yet been secured and attendance remains below average.
- The headteacher is tenacious in her determination to improve the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils. Her passion and vision are shared by other senior leaders. Success can be seen in improvements in the quality of teaching, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and the progress of pupils, especially in reading.
- Action plans focus clearly on the right areas that need to improve. However, the steps to measure success are not always precise enough and it is not always clear how senior leaders will judge the impact of actions on improving teaching and the progress of pupils.
- Senior staff and governors have not been afraid to take difficult decisions to improve teaching. The checking on teaching is more rigorous and actions are taken promptly to eradicate less effective teaching. All teachers and support staff have benefitted from a good range of training opportunities to improve their practice. Staff morale is positive because staff are supported sensitively, including those new to school. A typical teacher comment was, 'The headteacher and senior leaders have been really supportive as well as challenging my practice.'
- As yet not all middle leaders have enough opportunities to check on the impact of improvements on the quality of teaching and the progress of pupils in their areas of responsibility. This is hindering their effectiveness as leaders.
- Regular checks are now more tightly focused on how well individuals and groups of pupils are progressing and support is given quickly to those who need it. This reflects the school's commitment to giving all pupils equal opportunities, although the most able pupils do not always make enough progress.
- The range of subjects is planned creatively around book themes such as 'Chocolate', links with the local secondary school to promote fair trade and the importance of learning a musical instrument such as the guitar or the Ukulele. Although sufficient time is allocated to English and mathematics, not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to practise and extend their writing skills in other subjects.
- Although moving in the right direction, the attendance and punctuality of pupils is not yet good enough. Strategies employed by the school, including work with the local authority have not sufficiently well addressed the responsibilities of all parents to ensure their children attend school as often as possible.
- Strong partnerships have enabled staff to share practice and observe outstanding learning and teaching. This has led to improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in reading and the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school has also received good quality support for leadership and management from the local authority.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well with multi-faith weeks and many opportunities to help others, such as supporting a Children's Centre in Uganda. The wonderful Sadie's Garden is a special place for reflection, creativity and growing vegetables.
- Good links exist with parents and the community. The school makes particularly good use of the local Brunswick Club's gardening project to help pupils grow vegetables for the benefit of local people. Good use is made of primary school sports funding to improve sports coaching. Increasing participation is evident in the many sports clubs on offer.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is good. The Chair of the Governing Body provides good leadership and has led

successful improvements in strengthening the rigour and effectiveness of the work of the governors.

- Governors, including those who are new to role, know the school well and share a vision for making the school the best it can be. They visit school regularly and use detailed information they receive from staff and other governors to ensure that they know the school's strengths and weaknesses. They use data effectively to compare the progress of different groups of pupils. They have a clear understanding of teaching and know that this has improved and is now more consistent. Governors review teachers' targets that are set to improve their performance. However, they have not yet ensured that teachers are fully held to account via their pay progression for all pupils making at least good progress.
- Governors monitor the school's budget carefully and have ensured that the pupil premium and sports funding are used well, and are clear about their successful impact. Governors ensure that arrangements to safeguard pupils 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	132208
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	442412

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	346
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Siobhan Dargan
Headteacher	Angela Holleran
Date of previous school inspection	24 January 2013
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