

# St Joseph's RC Primary School, Todmorden

Wellington Road, Todmorden Road, Lancashire, OL14 5HP

**Inspection dates** 24–25 September 2014

| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Requires improvement        | 3        |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
|                                | This inspection:     | <b>Requires improvement</b> | <b>3</b> |
| Leadership and management      |                      | Requires improvement        | 3        |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils |                      | Requires improvement        | 3        |
| Quality of teaching            |                      | Good                        | 2        |
| Achievement of pupils          |                      | Good                        | 2        |
| Early years provision          |                      | Good                        | 2        |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Senior leaders do not evaluate the impact of their actions to improve teaching and pupils' achievement robustly enough. Plans for future improvement do not have clear goals against which success can be measured.
- Subject leaders do not all have the skills to enable them to check and evaluate teaching and learning in their areas.
- Behaviour requires improvement because occasional incidents of inappropriate behaviour occur outside the classroom. In lessons, pupils sometimes drift off task when work does not sufficiently challenge them.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe requires improvement because not all pupils have a clear understanding of the different types of bullying and racism.
- Leaders do not record the action taken to resolve incidents of misbehaviour well enough, and records are not analysed so that leaders have a clear picture of pupils' behaviour over time.
- Not all teaching assistants have a clear understanding of their roles so that they can always help the pupils they support to learn quickly. Leaders' checks on their performance are at an early stage of development.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils now make good progress; this represents good achievement from their different starting points.
- Children in the early years make good progress because of the good teaching they receive from experienced staff who understand their needs well.
- The quality of teaching is now strong throughout the school. Teachers use a good range of techniques to ensure pupils are clear about what they are to learn.
- Pupils are taught well to link letters with the sounds of words. A greater proportion of pupils than the average reach the expected standard in the check of pupils' early reading skills at the end of Year 1.
- Governors have a good range of skills and expertise. They know how well the school is doing and have helped to bring about improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement.
- The governing body ensures that safeguarding requirements are met.

### Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven lessons or parts of lessons. One was observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector listened to pupils read and reviewed the work in their books.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders and different groups of people involved with the school. These included pupils, parents, members of the governing body, members of the teaching staff and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector took into account the results of the school's recent annual parental survey, the 16 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, 16 responses from staff to the inspection questionnaire, one letter to the inspector from a parent and three concerns raised with Ofsted by parents.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including plans for improvement, records of the school's checks on pupils' performance, limited records of the school's checks on teachers' performance, safeguarding and attendance documents, minutes of meetings of the governing body and school policies.

### Inspection team

Faheem Chishti, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is above average. The term disadvantaged is used to describe those pupils who are eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority. Both these groups are eligible for support through the pupil premium funding.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school provides a breakfast club.
- The new governing body replaced the interim executive board in May 2013.

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

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - plans for future improvement have clear goals against which success can be measured
  - leaders regularly check and evaluate the impact of actions taken to secure improvement to further raise teaching and pupils' achievement
  - subject leaders have the skills to enable them to check the quality of teaching and learning in their areas so that they can contribute to driving school improvement
  - all teaching assistants have a clear understanding of their roles, and that their performance is checked regularly.
- Improve the behaviour and safety of pupils by:
  - ensuring that all pupils have a clearer understanding of all forms of bullying and racism
  - recording clearly the action taken to resolve incidents of misbehaviour, and checking rigorously the behaviour records so that leaders have a clear picture of pupils' behaviour over time
  - ensuring that work is always sufficiently challenging so that pupils do not lose interest in their work.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, senior leaders, with good support from the governing body and an external consultant, have improved the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- The senior leadership team was restructured after the previous inspection. All members of staff in this small school have taken on additional or different leadership responsibilities. Communication throughout the school has improved.
- Systems are established to check how well the school is doing. Information is used to identify the next steps to improve the school further. However, plans for future improvement do not have clear goals against which success can be measured. Senior leaders do not evaluate the impact of their actions to raise the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement further robustly enough.
- Many subject leaders are new to their role. They do not yet have the skills to enable them to check and evaluate teaching and learning in their areas and so are not yet able to fully contribute to improving the school further.
- Checks on the quality of teaching are largely led by the headteacher and an external consultant. The headteacher understands what constitutes good teaching, and inspection evidence shows that she judges it accurately. However, these checks do not yet involve other senior and subject leaders.
- An appropriate system for performance management is established. Teachers are clear that they will only be rewarded when their pupils have done as well as, or better than, they should have done. A good range of professional development has contributed to improving teachers' skills.
- Leaders' checks on the performance of teaching assistants are at an early stage of development. Not all teaching assistants have a clear understanding of their roles so that they can always help the pupils they support to learn quickly.
- The subjects that are taught meet the needs of pupils. Rightly, the focus is on developing pupils' basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders provide interesting opportunities for pupils to broaden their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness and their understanding of British values.
- Leaders are in the early stages of agreeing a preferred approach to assessment following the removal of National Curriculum levels. They are working very closely with the cluster of schools in Todmorden to agree a unified local approach.
- The primary sports funding is used wisely to buy in specialist sports coaches to provide opportunities for pupils to experience dance, martial arts and cricket. The funding has also enabled the school to take part in sports competitions such as netball, football and swimming. Pupils have also benefited from opportunities to learn how they can lead healthier lifestyles. Leaders are working to find better solutions so that they can take part in competitions given the small number of pupils in the school.
- The local authority has a clear understanding of pupils' achievement and provides effective support for senior leaders. Local authority staff also check the quality of the support given by the external consultant.
- Most parents speak highly of the school; however, there is a small but significant minority of parents who express the view that leadership and management are not effective. Parents' involvement in the life of the school is good. A very large number of parents attend the parent and toddler group every Wednesday morning, leading to a waiting list of parents wanting to attend.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The new governing body of this school is effective. Governors have a wide range of skills, expertise and experience as both previous governors and school leaders. They bring rigour and thoroughness to school leadership. They provide a high level of challenge to leaders through efficient meetings, sharp documentation and the clarity of their actions. Governors know how well the school is doing and have helped to bring about improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement. The governing body's own action plan ensures that governors are not complacent and keep themselves up to date with latest educational developments and their responsibilities as governors. Named subject governors take an active part in helping to lead their subjects and check on the progress of leaders in school well.
  - Governors make certain that the budget is managed carefully. They ensure additional funding such as the pupil premium and the primary sports funding is used wisely. For example, to ensure that those pupils who need it can be taught in small groups, and that specialist sports coaches can deliver some physical education lessons. They check regularly that all pupils gain benefit from this. The governing body ensures that safeguarding procedures are robust and meet current requirements.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils** requires improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is generally good. Most pupils are polite and well mannered. They are keen to learn and, as a result, make good progress during lessons. However, occasionally, when activities do not gain their full attention, they drift off task and their learning slows.
- Pupils are aware of the sanctions and rewards that the school has in place to secure good behaviour, although these vary from class to class. Nevertheless, the school's records show that sometimes incidents of misbehaviour happen outside of lessons, for example during playtime or lunchtime.
- Leaders do not record the action taken to resolve incidents of misbehaviour well enough, and records are not analysed so that leaders have a clear picture of pupils' behaviour over time.
- Exclusion rates are low. There was one permanent exclusion in 2013.
- Pupils care for each other and their surroundings reasonably well. Sometimes, pupils will readily support one another. For example, by sitting and talking to an individual who has sat on the 'friendship bench'.
- Year 6 pupils act as 'buddies' for the youngest pupils during lunchtimes, and this helps to improve social skills. However, pupils are not yet given enough opportunities to regularly take on leadership roles that are clearly visible on a daily basis. For example, the role of school chaplains is often limited to special occasions or with particular guests.
- There are limited opportunities for pupils to assist with the running of the school on a regular basis. For example, lunchtimes are tightly controlled by adults who can keep pupils waiting at their tables for up to 15 minutes before they are allowed to queue up for their lunch.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement.
- Pupils' understanding of the different types of bullying, as well as racism, is not fully secure. Although they are able to discuss the effects of the different forms of bullying, pupils do not fully understand the different terms and types because these are not explicitly taught by the school. Leaders do not record all racist or homophobic incidents in a systematic way. Records do not show how the incident was resolved or how pupils have learnt from the incident to ensure that it is not likely to happen again.
- Pupils' physical safety is usually very well managed. There is adequate supervision during playtime, lunchtime and the start and end of the day.
- The school operates a well-attended breakfast club for around 20 pupils. The activities provided for the pupils are appropriate. Attendance has improved recently and is just above the national average. This is due to leaders' efforts to encourage pupils to attend regularly.
- Parents who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and those who met with the inspector expressed mixed views about the pupils' behaviour and safety. For example, although all parents expressed the view that their child was safe in this school, a significant minority felt that the school does not deal effectively with bullying.

**The quality of teaching** is good

- Inspection evidence, including the scrutiny of work in pupils' books and discussions with pupils shows that the quality of teaching over time is now typically good. This is an improvement from the previous inspection.
- Pupils listen attentively to their teachers who command their respect well in the classroom. Teachers make clear to pupils what they are to learn and use a range of different strategies to capture pupils' interest.
- Work is usually at the right level so that pupils, including the most able, learn quickly. However, occasionally tasks and activities are not challenging enough and in these instances pupils drift off task; this slows their learning.
- The most able pupils are often given extra activities to stretch their learning further, although on occasions this could be done sooner. For example, during an observation in Key Stage 1, the most able Year 2 pupils found the counting activities too easy during the whole-class mental and oral introduction and this slowed their progress.
- The teaching of mathematics is now good. Teachers have a secure understanding of the new curriculum, and use a range of resources and practical activities to present mathematical problems as real-life scenarios; this helps pupils to learn quickly. Teachers are now starting to widen the chances that pupils have to use their mathematical skills across a range of subjects.
- Reading is taught effectively throughout the school. Phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is taught

well and so pupils are able to apply these skills when they read and write. Most pupils enjoy reading. Most have several books that they take home to read including a book of their own choice, especially in the early years and Key Stage 2.

- Writing skills are now taught well, including grammar, punctuation and spelling. In all classes, spelling errors are quickly picked up and corrected and this aids pupils' learning. However, the quality of writing in pupils' English work books is of a higher standard than in their topic books.
- Teachers' marking is clear and helpful across the school. Teachers often make extensive comments and pupils usually respond to their teachers' suggestions on how to improve their work.
- While some teaching assistants support and guide pupils' learning well, this is not consistent practice in all classes. Occasionally, valuable teaching time is lost because teaching assistants wait for instructions from the teacher, or focus too much on an individual pupil at the expense of others. As a result, pupils do not always learn as well as they could.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are taught well. Teachers now identify these pupils' needs and skills quickly and put the necessary support in place to boost their learning. The support offered individually to these pupils by teaching assistants is good.

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupil numbers in each year group vary from year to year, for example there were only four pupils in Year 6 in 2014. This makes overall comparisons with national data sometimes unreliable.
- Good teaching is now securing better progress in reading, writing and mathematics, but this is yet to be fully reflected in standards by the end of Year 6. However, school data and the work in pupils' books show that standards in most year groups are rising.
- In 2013, standards by the end of Year 2 were below average. However, from their starting points on entry to Year 1 pupils made at least the progress expected of them. By the end of Year 6, standards in 2013 were below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Nevertheless, from their starting points at the end of Year 2, pupils made expected progress and an above-average proportion did better than this in all three subjects.
- In 2014, unpublished data shows that standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 improved in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 6, standards were broadly average overall. Most pupils made the progress expected of them and many did better than this. This reflects good achievement from their starting points.

Reading skills are taught well, for instance, using phonics, and pupils use their growing skills successfully when they read and write. Pupils in Year 1 did well in the reading check in 2013 and results increased again in 2014. More pupils than the average reached the expected standard in both years. Standards are above the national average.

- Pupils' writing skills are now developed well as they move through the school. They are now given growing opportunities to write for extended periods of time in subjects other than in English. There is a good focus on improving the key skills in spelling and punctuation in each class.
- In mathematics, pupils now make faster progress because they now have more chances to solve problems set in real-life scenarios and reinforce key number skills in different subjects.
- Inspection findings show that the most able pupils are now achieving well in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because they are usually given work that helps them to learn quickly. However, occasionally, they are not given activities to 'stretch them' soon enough.
- The performance of disadvantaged pupils shows that they achieve well from their different starting points.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar good progress to their classmates. This is because they are well taught by the adults who support them.

### The early years provision is good

- Leadership and management place a strong emphasis on ensuring children get a good start to their learning at St Joseph's. Adults in the Nursery and Reception classes work together well and teamwork is strong. Children settle quickly and soon learn the early years routines. Relationships are good and this supports children's well-being.

- Many children join the Nursery class with skills and knowledge below those typical for their age. As a result of good teaching, the different groups, including the most able and those with special educational needs, now make good progress, so that by time they leave the Reception class, typically children reach the level expected of them. As a result, they are well prepared for their learning in Year 1.
- Children's understanding of the world and their mathematical skills are weaker elements of their understanding when they arrive in Nursery. By the time they leave the early years these relative weaknesses have been eradicated because children have the chance to experience lots of practical experiences and learn in small groups with adults.
- Focused teaching in small groups ensures children have lots of opportunities to interact with adults and share their ideas. They are not afraid to share their personal anecdotes with the whole class as part of their learning. For example, during a phonics session, a child described how she kept her table lamp 'on' in her bedroom when discussing the sound 'o'. Adults listen to children attentively and respond with questions and comments to develop children's thinking and understanding further.
- There are a good range of resources and activities indoors that contribute well to children's learning and to developing their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Outdoors, a stimulating new green area including wormery, gardening and nature dome adds to children's excitement of the world around them. However, occasionally, the activities offered outdoors do not fully reflect and complement those inside, and sometimes children are not able to readily choose to learn either inside or outdoors.

## 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> | 107560     |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Calderdale |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 442217     |

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

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| <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> | 118                                    |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                     |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Jim Livesey                            |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Maria Cooper                           |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 6 February 2013                        |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01706 812948                           |
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