

St Jerome's Catholic Primary School

Greenloons Drive, Formby, Liverpool, Merseyside, L37 2LX

Inspection dates 15–16 October 2013

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Outstanding | 1 |
| | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | | Good | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Attainment in English and mathematics is well-above average and has been so for a number of years.
- Teaching is of a good quality overall with some teaching outstanding.
- Children get off to a good start in the Reception class as a result of good teaching and provision.
- Pupils' outstanding behaviour is supported by very strong provision for their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Pupils feel extremely safe and are a delight to talk with.
- Parents think highly about the school and pupils' attendance is well-above average.
- The headteacher, with the support of the acting deputy headteacher, leads the school well. She has a highly positive impact on the quality of teaching and levels of pupils' attainment at the school.
- The governing body is very knowledgeable about all aspects of the school's work and, as such, is not only very supportive but also holds the school to account very well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding.
- Pupils' progress in some age groups is good overall rather than excellent.
- Teachers do not always use questioning well.
- At times not all lessons move at an appropriate pace so that all pupils make the best possible progress.
- Opportunities are sometimes missed during monitoring lessons to focus closely on the progress of different groups of pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons or parts of lessons. Additional short visits to lessons were carried out to look at issues such as how well pupils get on with their classmates and their overall behaviour.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils chosen at random, the Chair of the Governing Body, other members of the governing body and with senior staff. A telephone call was held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and talked to them about the types of books they enjoy.
- Pupils' current work and assessments were scrutinised, including available work which showed the achievement of pupils in English and mathematics from the previous year.
- Inspectors reviewed 85 responses from parents to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). The lead inspector also spoke to some parents and read letters sent in by parents.
- Inspectors reviewed the inspection questionnaires completed and returned by staff.

Inspection team

Geoff Yates, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Emma Jackson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils 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 broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be supported by pupil premium funding is well-below 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.
- In 2012, the school met the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school has achieved many external awards, including the National Healthy Schools' award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching so that more pupils make excellent progress by:
 - ensuring that all lessons move at an appropriate pace so that pupils have time to make the best possible progress
 - ensuring that teachers' questioning is highly effective in helping pupils make very rapid progress
 - ensuring that leaders, when monitoring lessons, have a greater focus on what progress different groups of pupils are actually making.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children join the school with levels in their knowledge and skills typical for their age. Over-time, children in the Reception Year make good progress because of good teaching. This good progress continues through the rest of the school. As a result, pupils' achievement is good.
- While there are examples of outstanding progress in mathematics, progress across year groups overall is good. Inspection evidence confirms this to be the case. Attainment in mathematics is consistently high as a result of teachers' high expectations and work that is challenging and made interesting by the teachers.
- By Year 6, standards in English and mathematics are well above average and have been so for a number of years. Lessons observations, scrutiny of work and hearing pupils read confirm this is the case for current pupils too.
- All pupils including the most-able pupils attain well in reading, writing and mathematics, benefitting from outstanding teaching in Year 6. For example, during the inspection the use of peer marking of each other's work, demonstrated clearly that pupils had a full understanding of the purpose of the review in order to improve progress even further.
- Pupils make especially good progress in their personal development and are articulate and confidently express their knowledge and understanding.
- In the national check on Year 1 reading skills in 2012, pupils' skills were below the national average. Improvements have been made in the teaching of letters and sounds. As a result, younger pupils now use their knowledge well to sound out and spell words for reading and writing and pupils' skills are above the national average.
- There is a high level of participation in physical education for pupils. These include out-of-school sporting activities. Pupils are developing healthy lifestyles; they understand, and can clearly explain, the importance of taking part in sport to help to improve their physical well-being.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress in developing their basic literacy and numeracy skills.
- The number of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is very low and, in some age groups, there are no pupils. As such, any comparisons with the progress made nationally by pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or with pupils who attend the school who are not entitled to free school meals need treating with great care. However, there is nothing to suggest that there are any gaps between the achievement of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and that of other pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

- The good quality overall and, at times, outstanding quality of teaching pupils receive makes sure they make good progress. During the inspection, teaching was good with some examples of outstanding teaching.
- The high level of respect and very good relationships between pupils and their teachers create a very good climate for learning to take place. Teachers work very successfully to provide activities that make learning interesting. For example, pupils are given plenty of opportunities to use information and communication technology equipment and to benefit from first-hand experiences, for example, using the beach classroom.
- Teaching is not outstanding because, for example, at times opportunities are missed to use questioning well to extend pupils' learning. On occasions, the pace of the lesson slows which prevents pupils making very rapid progress.
- Where teaching is outstanding, teachers recognise when pupils are not learning as well as they might and make changes so that their progress is excellent rather than good.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are encouraged to be independent. Resources both

inside and outside are used to extend children's skills. However, during the inspection the activities outside were not always as well planned as those inside. Every opportunity is taken to develop children's speaking and listening skills. For example, pupils are encouraged to talk about what the differences are between the shapes they are looking at.

- Reading is taught well across the school. This is because teachers are skilled in helping pupils develop their reading skills and provide sufficient time in lessons for pupils to read. Pupils say they enjoy reading and like both fiction and non-fiction texts.
- Teachers ensure that pupils are given good opportunities to extend their writing and mathematical skills in the work they do in other subjects. For example, in Year 1, pupils use their writing skills well to produce their own estate agent's house-sale posters. Pupils' books are marked regularly and marking is mostly of a good quality.
- Teachers emphasise the need for accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar in pupils' written work but work is not always presented well. A very good emphasis is placed on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills and this is helping pupils become increasingly confident.
- The good work of support staff is important in helping pupils with special educational needs, both in class and in small groups, to make good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils are very keen to learn and are happy to share their learning with their classmates. For example, Year 6 pupils talk knowledgeably and enthusiastically about the work they are doing linked to a study of the Second World War.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning and enjoy school. They make an exceptional contribution to their own learning. Parents who completed the on-line questionnaire agree with this.
- Pupils behave exceedingly well and not just in classrooms. For example, lunchtimes are sociable occasions and pupils' behaviour is excellent. In the playground, pupils play very well together and are proud to demonstrate, for example, their skipping skills.
- A scrutiny of records, and observations during the inspection, show that behaviour over time is excellent. Isolated incidents of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with well.
- All members of staff are very aware that they must not only meet the academic needs of the pupils but also their personal needs. This they do well and this is an important factor in making sure pupils make good progress.
- The school is successful in fostering high quality relationships and there are many opportunities provided in the curriculum to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have highly positive views on the importance of helping those less fortunate than themselves.
- Pupils take part in a wide range of activities, including sporting events, choir and instrumental tuition and are very proud of what they achieve. It was an absolute delight during the inspection to listen to pupil flautists playing together so very well. One pupil commented, 'It is great to be able to play music with my classmates.'
- Pupils have a very good understanding of how to keep safe and are very confident that any issues they raise will be dealt with promptly by the school. They recognise dangers when using the internet and know how to avoid these problems. Pupils have an excellent understanding of different types of bullying for their age.
- Pupils respond extremely well to the many opportunities provided for them to take on school responsibilities. These include jobs in the classroom, being a member of the eco council, the school council or the bike-it council. Around the school, pupils are always very willing to help visitors.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and acting deputy headteacher share high ambitions for the school. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They keep all aspects of its work under close scrutiny.
- Staff who completed the staff questionnaire are very positive about all aspects of school life.
- Pupils' progress is tracked closely.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination well. There is a real sense of community.
- The curriculum provides an abundance of opportunities for pupils to learn a varied range of subjects. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural is strong. The issue from the previous inspection regarding pupils' cultural awareness has been addressed well. Pupils have a very good awareness of the importance of respecting others and of helping those less fortunate than they are.
- Robust checking on the school's work by senior leaders, linked to a well-planned programme of staff development, is well established. The monitoring of teaching and of the performance of teachers is of a good quality, involving all senior leaders. Staff pay awards and performance management targets are closely linked to pupils' achievements.
- Opportunities are sometimes missed during monitoring sessions in classrooms to focus closely on the progress of different groups of pupils.
- The local authority regards the school as one only in need of 'light touch' support. This includes being involved in the headteacher's performance management reviews.
- The school has a well-written plan in place as to how the physical education funding will be used to enhance further the provision for physical education, when it is received.
- Child protection and safeguarding have a high priority. Leaders ensure that all requirements are met and that the building is a safe environment.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is very strong. Governors not only support the school but ask challenging questions of it. Training ensures governors have sharpened their skills. Governors ensure that the systems to check the performance of teachers are robust and they receive information about the quality and leadership of teaching, seeking assurance that salary levels are linked to performance. They are well aware of any areas for development in the school and closely examine the data on pupils' progress. Legal responsibilities are discharged well. Governors keep a close check on the school's budget and, even though the amount is very small, try to make sure that pupil premium money is used to good effect for the purpose intended. The safeguarding of pupils is a high priority and governors ensure that the implementation of all related policies is robust.

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 | 104938 |
| Local authority | Sefton |
| Inspection number | 424592 |

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 | 5–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 212 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | C Henderson |
| Headteacher | K Monaghan |
| Date of previous school inspection | 7 March 2007 |
| Telephone number | 0151 2886003 |
| Fax number | 01704 831724 |
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