

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Sancreed Road, Parkstone, Poole, BH12 4DZ

Inspection dates 26–27 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
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

- Highly ambitious and focused leadership has resulted in well-established, improved provision that enables pupils of all ages to make good progress across the school, often from below expected level starting points.
- Children make a very good start to their life in school in the well organised and welcoming Reception classes.
- Pupils are now achieving particularly well in reading.
- Teaching is almost always good and sometimes outstanding. Teachers check pupils' progress promptly and accurately across a range of subjects, helping them to make secure improvements and develop their understanding.
- Those pupils who are most disadvantaged, many of whom join the school at other than the usual times, make very good progress.
- The subjects taught make learning relevant and fun, and are enlivened by regular visitors and visits to places of local interest.
- Pupils feel safe, behave well and enjoy school. Many very effective, enrichment activities promote their spiritual, moral and social development extremely well.
- The acting headteacher, with the acting deputy headteacher, has reorganised all aspects of the school. As a result, the school has improved strongly, particularly over the last year, as weaker teaching has been addressed by senior leaders and governors.
- Governors are very knowledgeable about the school's work. They visit regularly and monitor all aspects of its work closely. They provide effective support and hold leaders to account robustly for pupils' achievements.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The proportion of outstanding teaching is not yet high enough to ensure all pupils' progress is rapid across all year groups. In a small minority of lessons, some pupils are not given enough challenge in the tasks offered.
- Not all pupils achieve as well in writing as they do in reading.
- Plans for staff to share their skills and expertise to enable further improvements in teaching are not fully developed.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 31 part lessons, some being observed together with the acting headteacher or acting deputy headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the acting headteacher, acting deputy headteacher, teachers and other members of staff. The chair and five other governors were spoken to, as well as parents and pupils.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' work and heard pupils from different year groups read.
- Inspectors took account of 68 responses to the online Parent View survey, letters and telephone calls from parents and 24 staff questionnaires.
- They observed the school's work, and looked at school documentation, including records showing how the school is improving, data on pupils' progress and arrangements for safeguarding.

Inspection team

David Marshall, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Anne Bark	Additional Inspector
Ann Sydney	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- In this above average-sized primary school the majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- An average proportion of pupils are eligible for additional funds (pupil premium). Pupil premium is additional government funding based on the number of children in school who are looked after by the local authority, those from service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals. In this school there are no pupils from service families.
- The percentages of pupils who need extra help, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action, is average. The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is just above average.
- No pupils are educated in any alternative provision away from the school site.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school has been led by an acting headteacher and acting deputy since the death of the substantive headteacher in April 2013.
- There have been many staff changes, short-term staff absences covered by temporary teaching staff, and a range of new appointments since the last inspection.
- There has also been a number of changes in the governing body since the last inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and of achievement so that both are outstanding by ensuring that:
 - pupils achieve at least as well in writing as they do in reading
 - pupils are challenged in all lessons so that they can reach their full potential
 - opportunities for staff to observe and share the outstanding practice in the school are extended.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- All pupils are now making good, if varied, progress in all year groups from their starting points, which are often below those expected for their age. Pupils' progress is increasing more rapidly because of the significant improvements in teaching. The acting headteacher and acting deputy have worked closely with the school's consultants and local authority staff to focus on the quality of teaching in all year groups.
- Older pupils are making exceptional progress and the extensive school records show that the standards that these pupils are reaching, particularly in reading, are above average. This is because the school has made some effective changes to the way in which teachers check pupils' learning and pupils know what they need to do next to improve. The results for 2013, which were disappointing for the school, were of a particular group that had started from a very low point.
- Children in the Reception classes make very good progress from their lower than expected starting points. As a result, the outcomes of the phonics screening check for pupils in Year 1 in 2013 were well above those found nationally. School evidence shows that the consistently improving progress of the last four years at the end of Key Stage 1 is continuing.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 thrive as a result of being given work which challenges them. Strong teacher knowledge means that work is presented in a stimulating and exciting way which captures pupils' attention. This contributes to the good, and sometimes exceptional, progress that pupils are making. However, in some lessons, and often in writing lessons, pupils are not always challenged to reach their full potential and this affects their rates of progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are successfully meeting the challenging targets set for them and often make outstanding progress. The school has high expectations of pupils, regardless of any barriers they have to overcome.
- Pupils who are eligible for support through additional funding (pupil premium) are also making good progress. In 2013, the gaps in attainment between the groups of Year 6 pupils supported through the pupil premium and other Year 6 pupils represented about three terms' progress, but are closing. The impact of the school's investment of additional support is now being seen for the pupils currently on roll. Consequently, gaps are now quickly narrowing as pupils move through the school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good because it enables pupils to achieve well. Teachers know the pupils well and enjoy teaching them. This enables all pupils to enjoy their learning and grow in confidence as they move through the school.
- Teachers plan their lessons very carefully to ensure that pupils are clear about what skills, knowledge and understanding it is intended that they learn. In the Year 5/6 classes pupils are routinely checked on how well they have grasped the aims of the lesson as it progresses. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, staff know the children well and intervene particularly effectively to support their speech and language development. The well-resourced learning areas ensure that children have a good range of activities and resources, both inside and outside. Staff check pupils' progress carefully.
- The teaching of mathematics is strong, and improving, especially with regard to using and applying mathematical concepts.
- The use of specialist teachers was shown to great effect during the inspection. As a result, the progress made in music, in particular, is outstanding.
- The additional programmes for pupils who need extra help are taught especially well. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding not only achieve well but, as the school's data show, are starting to close the gaps on their peers

successfully.

- Marking is very effective and pupils know how their work can improve. This results in good relationships as they are encouraged to test out ideas or evaluate each other's work. For example, pupils judge their success in each lesson, through the Brain (themselves), Buddy (other pupils) and Boss (the teacher). Pupils are also given time in lessons when they can act on the advice given in marking in their books. Pupils report it provides them with a very good idea of how they can achieve better.
- Occasionally, particularly in writing, teachers do not challenge pupils sufficiently well to ensure they make more rapid progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. In almost all lessons, pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning and are keen to participate across a range of subjects and activities. They cooperate well with staff and with each other. The way pupils settled and joined in and worked with a visiting theatre group and pupils from another school was a good measure of their high levels of confidence and respect for others.
- Only very occasionally, when teaching is not as effective as it mostly is, are pupils off task and not focused on their work. No disruptive behaviour was seen during the inspection and pupils report that it rarely occurs. On those very few occasions when it does, it is dealt with very quickly by staff. Pupils are well aware of the rewards and sanctions system and say they are fair and make them work hard. School records show that exclusions from school are extremely uncommon.
- Pupils behave sensibly when moving around the school between lessons and at lunchtimes. This was tested out to the full during the inspection as sudden spells of heavy rain kept the pupils running inside at break times.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils are knowledgeable about different forms of bullying, including those related to internet use and mobile phones. Pupils told inspectors that while name calling and minor bullying incidents occur from time to time, they are confident in the ability of staff to manage these well.
- Inspection evidence shows leaders make effective use both of the school's own staff and also liaise well with external agencies to maximise pupils' chances of success whenever it is necessary to employ more extensive support for those few pupils with known behavioural problems.
- A very large majority of parents and staff consider that pupils behave well and are kept safe in school.

The leadership and management are good

- The acting headteacher, with the acting deputy, has led the school exceptionally well over the last year. They are very well supported by the effective governing body.
- Leaders and managers together have developed high expectations of staff and pupils, which have completely transformed the outcomes for all pupils. As a result, achievement, attendance and behaviour have all improved. As one parent observed, 'It was always a good school before, but now it is amazing.'
- Teachers are set high targets which are linked to teaching standards. It is a reflection of the senior leaders' effectiveness that the quality of teaching has become consistently good despite the many changes. New staff speak highly of the effective induction programme. A combination of outstanding external support and careful mentoring by senior leaders has enabled teachers to improve quickly.
- Other leaders and managers, who are subject or phase leaders, are well supported by senior leaders and are becoming increasingly confident in their roles.
- The subjects that are taught are described by pupils as 'really fun'. This wide range of subjects and activities contributes very strongly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural

development. Lessons are enriched well through a range of after-school activities and by opportunities for pupils to learn a foreign language, to play instruments and to sing. Visits, including residential visits, and opportunities to develop sporting and artistic skills add further enhancement.

- The school is making good use of the primary sports funding. The school is using specialist teachers to provide additional activities while supporting the training of staff. This is increasing participation in sport and well-being.
- The school develops very effective relationships with parents and carers. As one parent said, 'I know how well my son has done well before we get home, he can't wait to tell me.' Many parents speak about how approachable staff are.
- The local authority has provided very effective support to the school. External consultants from an outstanding school have also supported the school exceptionally well to improve the quality of teaching and to analyse data.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors challenge and support the school well as a result of effective training and their own broad experience. They regularly visit the school and monitor its work. They have a good knowledge of how well pupils are progressing and the data about pupils' outcomes. They know the school's strengths and areas for development. They are aware of how the pupil premium funding is spent and the impact it has on progress, including on attendance. They know about the quality of teaching and ensure that teachers are set high targets and reward staff when this is appropriate. Any staff underperformance is tackled decisively. Safeguarding arrangements are rigorously applied and meet all statutory 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	113831
Local authority	Poole
Inspection number	432410

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	322
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Hugh Fogarty
Headteacher	Judith Perring
Date of previous school inspection	26 November 2010
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