

Saint Mary's Catholic Primary

Gladstone Street, Glossop, SK13 8NE

Inspection dates 6–7 March 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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress from across the school. By the end of Year 6, they now reach standards that are above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is good and pupils respond well to their teachers' high expectations of them. Teachers' provide good quality written and spoken advice on how pupils can improve further.
- All groups of pupils, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those who receive the pupil premium funding, make good progress because adults understand their individual needs and provide tailored support for them.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They are exceptionally keen learners and are determined to succeed. Pupils show great care and respect for each other.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school, which they say is 'a safe and happy place'. The interesting topics and themes they are given include many musical events and this contributes well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- School leadership has strengthened since the previous inspection. Appointments of key staff and regular checks on learning have driven up the quality of teaching and standards across the school. Staff fully support the efforts of leaders to improve the school.
- Governors know the school exceptionally well and are committed to the success of every pupil. They visit regularly and provide good levels of support and challenge, ensuring that the school continues to improve rapidly.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers and support staff do not always check that pupils have read and acted upon comments when work is marked.
- Some pupils' progress slows because they wait too long for adults to tell them what to do next rather than work this out for themselves.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed ten lessons, five jointly with the headteacher. She also observed support sessions for pupils at risk of falling behind.
- The lead inspector attended one school assembly which celebrated World Book Day.
- The Inspector listened to pupils read in class, and spoke to a group of pupils and several others informally throughout the inspection. She spoke with the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, a representative from the local authority and school staff, including senior and subject leaders.
- The inspector noted the views of 17 parents and carers who responded to the online Parent View survey. She also spoke to parents and carers who were bringing their children to school.
- The inspector also noted the contents of 15 staff questionnaires completed during the inspection.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's information on pupils' current progress, planning documents, checks carried out by leaders on the school's effectiveness, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Aune Turkson-Jones, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Mary's is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of the pupils have White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional government funding provided for looked after children, those known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils with a parent in the armed forces, is slightly above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching, so that pupils make more rapid progress, by ensuring teachers:
 - regularly encourage pupils to read through teachers' comments on their work and to respond to this advice, so that they know how to avoid the same errors in future and improve their work
 - provide more tasks and activities which require pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding by thinking things through for themselves rather than always waiting for the teacher to tell them what to do next.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Reception class with skills and abilities that are generally below the levels typically seen at their age. They make a good start, settle quickly into the school's routines and quickly grow in confidence, developing positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils' progress is good and, by the end of Year 6, pupils now reach standards that are above average. Results have generally been average in the past but the standards of pupils currently in the school are rapidly improving in all year-groups. School information and pupils' current work indicate that pupils, including the most able, are on track to improve further in 2014. A higher proportion of pupils than that seen nationally are expected to achieve Level 6 in reading, writing and in mathematics.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium achieve well and gaps in attainment between these pupils and their classmates are closing quickly. They are currently working at similar levels to their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics and are making good levels of progress. Gaps are closing because the extra funding is used effectively to provide resources and staff to lead a range of support groups. It is also used to allow eligible pupils to access clubs, trips and activities. The football club is led by a professional footballer and a former pupil of the school who acts as an inspirational role model for the boys and girls who attend.
- Year 1 pupils achieved results slightly below national averages in the annual screening check in phonics in 2013. By the time pupils repeat the test in Year 2, they generally catch up with the standards seen in reading across the nation as a whole.
- Pupils' standards in reading have risen consistently over recent years and, in the case of pupils at the top of the school, they are now consistently good. All pupils have positive attitudes and read regularly, enthusiastically and for pleasure. This was especially apparent during the inspection when the whole school, including adults, celebrated World Book day, dressed as characters from their favourite books.
- Writing standards have risen since the previous inspection. Pupils write accurately for a range of purposes, with high levels of competence and confidence. They review and check their own work so that they know how to improve. Pupils take pride in their work, which is always neat and well-presented.
- In numeracy, teachers and other adults make good use of varied and colourful resources to help pupils learn. Teachers also make good use of online mathematics programmes, which pupils enjoy, to stimulate their interest and this has had a positive impact on raising achievement across the school.
- Additional sports funding is used well and teachers are working with specialists, such as a gym and dance coach, to enhance their own skills and confidence. Sport has an increasingly high profile in school and greater numbers of pupils are now joining teams and competing with other schools.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive good support and achieve well as a result. Additional funding to provide specialised adult support for smaller groups has been used effectively to promote these pupils' progress.

- Although pupils' progress is good overall, and improving for most groups, pupils are not always provided with tasks which encourage them to think things through for themselves and their pace of learning slows if they wait too long for their teacher to help them. This limits their capacity to fully develop their knowledge and thinking, so they do not always achieve levels that reflect their full potential.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers and teaching assistants work very closely together in lessons and many additional support sessions are led effectively by teaching assistants. They share planning and make sure that activities are interesting, motivating and suitably demanding for all pupils.
- All disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive good quality support at the right level for them in one-to-one or small-group activities. Pupils appreciate this and also the way the school's relaxed and friendly ethos gives them confidence and encourages them to do their best.
- Pupils become exceptionally keen learners because they rise to the challenges teachers set for them. Pupils make good use of the prompts displayed around the room and other resources to help develop their understanding and learn more. More-able pupils are given specific tasks of their own that are much more demanding, particularly in mathematics. This extends their learning considerably.
- Pupils learn exceptionally well because they know what is expected of them. Most teachers and supporting adults question pupils closely to check they understand their learning. When given the opportunity the majority of pupils are confident learners who try to think things through and attempt to solve problems for themselves. These opportunities are not, however, made available frequently enough across the school and some pupils wait too long for the teacher to tell them what to do.
- Teachers link activities carefully to pupils' targets so that the pupils understand what they are aiming for and have a greater sense of how they can achieve their goals. This good practice is becoming more widespread across the school.
- Marking is good in the majority of lessons and subjects. Teachers and teaching assistants provide good verbal feedback and detailed written comments. Teachers' marking offers a careful balance between praise and suggestions about how to improve. However, pupils are not regularly given the time to read and respond to comments. This limits their engagement with their learning and the extent to which they take responsibility for improving their work.
- Homework is regularly set across all years and tasks are demanding but realistic. Pupils understand that it is a regular feature and extension of their work in class and links with what they will be learning next.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are exceptionally positive in their attitudes to learning and take great responsibility for their own and others pupils' behaviour in the school, playing a very active part in maintaining its positive, friendly atmosphere. Pupils regularly express their views through school council representatives and are active in checking playground

behaviours.

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe in and outside school. They understand the importance of e-safety and the perils of misusing the internet and readily refer to school assemblies and talks which have raised their awareness.
- The parents, carers and staff agree that pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school is excellent. Pupils' attendance levels have risen since the last inspection because the school is quick to follow up absences. Pupils are also very receptive and keenly competitive within their house teams, rallying to gain points and weekly awards.
- School councillors and the newly formed Liturgy group, represent pupils well and regularly involve themselves in areas for school improvement, such as remodelling the outdoor space, and choosing new equipment to promote outdoor learning. Many act as very positive role models for others in the school.
- Bullying is very rare and dealt with effectively when it occurs. Pupils understand that if they cannot resolve conflicts themselves, they can rely on staff to intervene quickly. Racist language and discrimination in any form are not tolerated.
- Pupils are very proud of their school. The school buildings and grounds are impressively litter free, bright and filled with stimulating resources, so that even on a 'wet play' day, the pupils say that there is plenty to do. Pupils all speak positively about how much they enjoy and value being a part of the school and this is evident in their smart appearance, their request for ties to be added to the uniform and their impeccable manners.

The leadership and management are good

- Leadership and management are good. Key additions to the leadership team have strengthened its effectiveness in driving up achievement and improving the quality of teaching.
- The leadership team works well together with all members committed to securing continuous improvement. Their high expectations are reflected in the work of pupils and staff throughout the school. Many staff, during the inspection, expressed their praise for the headteacher and the assistant headteacher.
- The quality of teaching and its impact on achievement have been improved since the last inspection and all teaching is now at least good. Teaching and learning are managed well across the school.
- The school now reviews all aspects of its work thoroughly and acts very quickly to address any gaps, so that the pace of improvement remains swift. The school's own self evaluation is thorough and honest and leaders have identified areas which may be improved further to continue the rise in standards. Subject leaders work effectively and lead their areas of responsibility well.
- Staff training, together with the very effective and active partnerships with the local authority and the diocesan board, has led to marked improvements across the school since the previous inspection. Staff are now more skilful and confident in using assessment and progress information, and early gaps in learning are dealt with swiftly.

- Leaders make sure that teachers' pay and performance link directly to whole-school priorities and pupils' progress. Every member of the leadership team is active in checking the quality of teaching across the school, and class teachers and teaching assistants pair up to plan and prepare together. This has helped to improve the quality of teaching so that the majority is now consistently good or better.
- Activities in lessons are supplemented by a vast number of extra-curricular clubs and activities, enhanced by the sports, dance and music specialists who work with the school. Every pupil has the option to play a musical instrument and the ukulele has become a popular choice. The promotion of health through sport has a high profile in school and more pupils than previously attend clubs and represent the school.
- Equal opportunities are rigorously promoted and no pupil is denied access to anything the school has to offer. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development particularly well, and a strong pastoral programme ensures the all-round development of each pupil.
- The local authority recognises the effectiveness of the school and provides appropriate levels of support to ensure its success is maintained and built upon.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are highly committed to continuing to improve the school and new members have deliberately been recruited to enhance the range of governors' skills. The governors work closely with school leaders, the local authority and church diocese to ensure that raising the quality of teaching and learning remains at the heart of their work. They have a good understanding of information on pupils' progress, and refresh their knowledge through update training.
- Governors use the most recent data to make comparisons with other schools, locally and nationally, and actively challenge school leaders where dips occur. They meet regularly in the school, hold strategic meetings when the school is open, and make visits to check directly on key areas of the school's work.
- Governors ensure that financial resources are efficiently managed, including how pupil premium and sports funding impact on achievement through the extra support groups and increased numbers participating in sports, clubs and teams. Governors see that targets to improve the performance of staff are reviewed carefully and that teachers' pay is linked to how well pupils are doing. They are highly motivated and visible in the school and check that safeguarding meets 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	112901
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	440528

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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	149
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Christopher Stroger
Headteacher	Simon Groarke
Date of previous school inspection	30 March 2011
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