

St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School, Richmond

Cross Lanes, Richmond, North Yorkshire, DL10 7DZ

Inspection dates 30–31 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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.

- Attainment has risen since the previous inspection throughout the school, particularly in reading, and in 2012 was above average in English and slightly above in mathematics.
- Pupils make increasingly good progress across the school as a result of good teaching, which has improved through support from senior leaders and appropriate training.
- Teaching is good overall. Teachers expect pupils to do well and plan interesting activities that motivate and engage their interest.
- Adult support for pupils in lessons is highly effective and ensures pupils make good progress and achieve well. This includes pupils supported by pupil premium funding, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Pupils enjoy school. They show positive attitudes to learning and work well together because of the good relationships with their teachers and friends.
- Pupils behave well. They say they feel safe and know who to go to should they need help.
- Leadership and management are good. The senior and subject leaders and all staff work together as a close team, which is improving teaching and pupils' learning.
- Members of the governing body know the school well and have been instrumental in appointing well qualified members of staff and eliminating weak teaching. As a result, teaching and pupils' achievement have improved.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not consistently ensure that pupils are clear about what they have to do to achieve the next level in their work.
- Not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to practise their writing.
- Assessment data is not always used well enough to ensure pupils make the maximum progress expected of them.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 11 lessons, two of which were joint observations with the headteacher.
- In addition, inspectors made a number of shorter visits to lessons, heard groups of pupils read in Key Stages 1 and 2 and looked at their work with them in class.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 22 responses from parents to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and responses from the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school improvement plan, the school's data on pupils' current achievement, records relating to behaviour, safeguarding and attendance and minutes of governing body meetings.

Inspection team

Irene Cochrane, Lead inspector

Additional Inspection

Dominic Brown

Additional Inspection

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (funding provided to support the learning of pupils who are known to be entitled to free school meals, in the care of the local authority or children from forces' families) is below average.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- More pupils than usual join and leave the school other than at expected times. A significant proportion of these are from families at the nearby army garrison at Catterick.
- In 2012, the school met the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been a number of staff changes including three newly qualified teachers joining the school since September 2012 and other staff changing their roles and working hours.
- The school has achieved a number of nationally recognised accreditations, including the Enhanced Inclusion Quality Mark and Silver Eco School award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - ensuring assessment information is used effectively to plan work that is at the right level of difficulty for different groups
 - ensuring pupils are clear about the next steps in their learning
 - ensure the most effective practice is used by all teachers.
- Ensure that pupils' progress is tracked rigorously in all lessons so that all pupils are able to make consistently rapid progress by:
 - ensuring the new tracking system is fully embedded and used by all teachers
 - making certain that work set for pupils consistently challenges their thinking and understanding
 - extend the quality and range of opportunities for pupils to practise their writing.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils achieve well overall by Year 6. In 2012, pupils' attainment was well above average in English and slightly above average in mathematics. Pupils made good progress overall from their starting points. Attainment over time has frequently been slightly above average in English and mathematics and there has been a noticeable improvement in both subjects since the previous inspection, representing improvement over time. An increasing proportion of pupils reached the higher Level 5 in reading at the end of Year 6 to attain well above national outcomes.
- At the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is average and has shown continued improvement in reading and mathematics over the past two years. Although attainment in writing is average, it has shown more variation. Progress has been less rapid over Key Stage 1, as a result of staffing changes which have since been resolved and action taken has rapidly improved progress across Year 2. Previous inaccurate assessments have resulted in uneven progress across the school, which has been addressed through regular moderation of work and planned interventions and support. Systems to accurately assess and monitor pupils' progress have sharpened.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly in their personal and social development and communication skills. This is as the result of well-planned opportunities to become active learners and cooperate together. Children enjoy opportunities to read words and during the inspection, were keen to show off their newly acquired skills. An increasing proportion of children start school with skills that are below in those typically expected for their age, especially in communication and personal skills. Pupils' skills are broadly average when they enter Year 1.
- Those pupils who access additional support through pupil premium funding, including those who are not eligible for free school meals, make good progress in both English and mathematics. They receive high quality support to attain standards which are above similar pupils across the country except in writing which is just below and the gap in attainment is closing between them and all pupils. Their attainment is similar overall to pupils who are not eligible to support from pupil premium funding, with some variation in reading which is higher and below in writing and make better progress, particularly in English.
- Pupils from service families and those who join during the year are given additional quality support from the Pupil Support Adviser to help them settle well and to make good progress. This support is very much appreciated by parents.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress from their starting points and attain higher standards overall than similar pupils across the country. Their needs are accurately identified and staff are appropriately deployed to support them in their lessons.
- Inspection evidence shows that progress in reading is good. This is as a result of a key focus on sounding out letters to help pupils read words, and a drive to help pupils enjoy books and read more in school and at home. The school library has been recently developed to provide a wider range of books for pupils to access and manage independently.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers make learning interesting and plan activities that motivate and interest pupils effectively. There is a key focus on practical activities which pupils say they enjoy and maintains their interest. The use of paired and group work enables pupils to share their views and promotes confidence. This was observed in a Year 3 lesson when groups of pupils enthusiastically discussed what survival items they would need to take on a journey to Narnia and were able to evaluate their own choices as well as their peers.
- Pupils' positive attitudes to learning clearly reflect the harmonious relationships they have with their teachers. Pupils enjoy school. They behave well and are attentive as they listen to their

teachers and respond readily to tasks asked of them.

- In the best lessons, teachers ensure that differing abilities are successfully addressed and expectations are high. Teaching assistants are well briefed and use their skills to promote effectively pupils' learning. Tasks provide the right level of challenge and, therefore, pupils' learning progresses well and they know what they have to do to achieve the next level in their work.
- Where teaching is less effective, the differing needs of pupils are not so effectively addressed. This means that tasks do not successfully challenge all abilities and progress is not as good as it could be. Pupils are not always clear about the next steps in their learning.
- Teachers make good use of pupils' past learning to build upon the next steps and as a result, in these lessons pupils generally understand what is expected of them.
- The curriculum provides a range of opportunities for pupils to write but does not offer enough opportunities for pupils to write for sustained periods of time.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. The newly appointed leader is an enthusiastic role model and is resolute in her drive to provide the best opportunities for the children in her care. Relationships are strong and children are confident learners who enjoy learning through planned activities both indoors and outside.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are happy in school and enjoy their lessons, particularly when they are active learners. They respect one another, work and play well together and are polite to adults. They are keen to talk about their school and enjoy the many activities available, including the after-school clubs and information communication and technology equipment.
- Pupils say that behaviour is good and any misbehaviour is quickly dealt with by teachers. Good behaviour was evident in lessons observed as well as around the school. Even in the very small minority of lessons where learning was less exciting, pupils showed resilience in their learning and strived to learn.
- Inspectors analysed the school's records of behaviour, which showed that behaviour has improved noticeably over the past two years. This is as a result of the successful review of the behaviour policy, training and introduction of mentoring strategies. As a result, the number of exclusions has reduced significantly and the school now offers support to other local schools to improve behaviour. Consequently, all pupils are helped to behave well and settle quickly into school.
- Pupils feel safe and they are aware of different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying. They say that there are few instances of bullying, although sometimes friends occasionally fall out. When this occurs, they know it will be dealt with effectively. They know that teachers and other adults in school will help them with any problems. Most parents support the view that the school deals effectively with bullying.
- Attendance is average over time and improved in 2012. It has steadily improved as a result of the actions taken by the school to encourage pupils to attend. It has also improved because pupils enjoy their lessons and they like coming to school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has had a noticeable impact on improving the school. Since the previous inspection, she has shown determination to tackle the poor behaviour of a few pupils and to eliminate weak teaching and secure accurate assessments. Along with a clear understanding of how to improve teaching and regular observations of lessons involving other leaders, this has had a significant impact on improving the quality of teaching and is helping pupils to make faster

progress.

- The headteacher has an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for continued development. Significant changes in staffing have been managed as well as possible to eliminate disruption and to arrest underachievement. The introduction of a more refined pupil progress tracking system is enabling leaders to check on pupils' progress more precisely and raise expectations by setting challenging end-of-year targets. However, this information is not yet fully used by all teachers across the school. Other leaders are very clear about their responsibilities and have developed their role in contributing to school improvement.
- Newly qualified teachers value the support they receive from experienced members of staff in school and opportunities to attend training.
- Funding has been used well to improve the basic skills of those pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium, particularly to fund additional adult support and interventions. The gap in achievement between them and all pupils across the country is closing significantly. This shows the school's commitment to promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination.
- The curriculum provides a broad range of interesting experiences and places a high priority on improving pupils' basic skills. The recent review provides a topic approach that motivates and interests pupils. This imaginative approach enlivens lessons, although there are times when opportunities to develop writing are missed. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.
- The local authority has provided successful advice on how to improve pupils' behaviour, the quality of teaching and learning and moderation of assessments. As a result, advice has helped to improve all aspects and is considered to require a light touch of support for this improving school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has clear procedures to hold the school to account. They ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities for safeguarding. Together with the headteacher, governors have taken decisive action to tackle weak teaching and establish a core of good teachers whose performance is clearly assessed, linked to pay increases and whose training needs are effectively met. As a result, there have been improvements in teaching and leadership and in pupils' progress and behaviour in the past two years. They are fully aware of the needs of its pupils and their families and provide effective support to increase pupils' achievement. A high priority is placed upon keeping the governing body up to date through training because there is no complacency in members drive to ensure the school continues to improve.

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	121655
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	406042

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	154
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steve Lawson
Headteacher	Jill Collins
Date of previous school inspection	30 March 2011
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