School report

St John The Baptist Roman Catholic Primary School, Padiham

St John's Road, Padiham, Burnley, Lancashire, BB12 7BN

Inspection dates	23–24 April 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.

- Overall the achievement of pupils is good. This is because the vast majority make good progress, often from low starting points. Standards reached in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 are broadly average and sometimes above the national average.
- Many children join Nursery and Reception classes with knowledge and skills below those expected for their age. Because of the range of engaging activities offered, children leave the Early Years Foundation Stage having made good progress towards developing early reading, writing and mathematics skills.
- The quality of teaching is nearly always good, with examples of outstanding practice. As a result, pupils enjoy learning and make good progress as evidenced by the good quality of work seen in their books.
- The school's mission statement 'Love one another' is clearly reflected in pupils' attitudes and behaviour both inside and outside the classroom. Their good attitudes to learning help them to make good progress and achieve well. The courteous and considerate attitudes they display towards each other, staff and visitors mirror their good behaviour outside the classroom.
- Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and feel very safe and well cared for because 'school is like a family'.
- The headteacher and senior leaders' close working partnership with the governing body has sustained and built on the school's good performance. They have raised both the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement across the school since the previous inspection.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Standards in writing are lower than those in reading and mathematics. This is because pupils are not offered sufficient opportunity to undertake longer pieces of work to improve their writing skills.
- Teachers' marking and feedback does not consistently give pupils sufficient guidance on how to identify the next steps needed to improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 19 lessons and parts of lessons taught by teachers and support staff. A lesson observation was undertaken jointly with the headteacher. The inspection team also listened to pupils from Year 1 and Year 6 read and examined, with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, the quality of work in the books of pupils from across the school.
- The inspection team held meetings and had discussions with pupils, the headteacher, middle leaders, members of the school staff and six members of the governing body. They also met with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team took into account the views of 76 parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). They also took into account the views of 27 other parents who met informally with the inspection team at the school gate.
- The inspection team studied health and safety documentation, teachers' planning, documents relating to the procedures to check the performance of staff, pupils' attendance data and the school's system for checking pupils' progress.

Inspection team

Marian Thomas, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
John Shutt	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a slightly smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils who attend come from families of White British heritage, with a very small number from other ethnic groups.
- A slightly lower than average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported through school action is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is close to the national average.
- Last year the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has gained Healthy School accreditation, Lancashire PE Mark accreditation 2012 and has recently gained a Race Equality award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' achievement in writing across the school by ensuring pupils are given more opportunities to write extended independent pieces of work in different subjects.

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by improving the quality of marking in Key Stage 1 and 2 so that it gives pupils a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve both the content and presentation of their work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Last year pupils in Year 6 reached broadly average standards in reading and mathematics. Standards in writing were slightly lower. From their starting points in the Early Years Foundation Stage this represented good progress. School data shows that current Year 6 pupils are making good progress in English and mathematics and are on course to make greater gains than last year from a range of starting points. This represents good achievement overall.
- The most-able pupils in Year 6 are currently making good or better progress in mathematics and a small group are currently receiving extra support and tuition with the expectation that they will reach the higher Level 5 and 6 in this year's national tests.
- 'Books inspire me.' and 'I often get lost in a book at home.' are just two of the comments made by pupils demonstrating their love of reading, which also feeds into their leisure time. The recently introduced school 'blog' has further promoted pupils' reading skills and, coupled with a range of activities, including visits from authors, has contributed to the school's improved reading scores.
- Children often join the school's Nursery and Reception classes with reading, writing and numeracy development below and sometimes well below that typical for their age. The majority make good progress during their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage and leave with skills and knowledge which are closer to what is typical for their age. This increase in levels of achievement since the previous inspection is due to improvement to the quality of teaching and the increase in interesting and engaging activities which promote children's learning.
- Last year, standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 were above the national average. Current school data show pupils are set to make similar gains next year. Lesson observations, a scrutiny of pupils' work and listening to pupils read during the inspection, confirmed this finding.
- Last year the achievement of Year 1 pupils in the phonics screening check, which tests pupils' ability to link letters to sounds, was a little below others nationally. However, school has now improved the quality of the teaching of phonics in the Early Years Foundation Stage and this year pupils are on track for much higher scores.
- The progress of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals dipped last year. However, school data shows that they are currently making good and better progress and there are fewer gaps in the attainment of this group and others in the school. This is due to the more effective use of pupil premium funding. The school now uses this to provide extra support to boost pupils' achievement through one-to-one and small group sessions.
- Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, the most able and those from other ethnic backgrounds make equally good progress to their peers and achieve well in English and mathematics because staff provide well targeted extra help and guidance that meets their needs effectively. This shows the school's continuous commitment to ensuring every pupil has an equal opportunity.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good overall. School records and evidence in pupils' books support the school's view that the quality of teaching is good over time.
- 'Our teachers are ace at making lessons fun.' was the view of an older pupil. Information about how well pupils are doing is used well to plan future learning. As a result, work set accurately meets the needs of all pupils, enabling all groups, including the most-able, to make good progress.
- This could clearly be seen in English when Year 1 pupils were learning how to develop their writing skills by using their senses. Their excitement at recalling the sounds, tastes and smells of

a trip to the seaside was infectious; when asked to recall the taste of licking an ice-cream they became completely absorbed, one pupil describing the experience as, 'almost as good as eating one'. Fuelled by the outstanding use of praise, all groups made excellent progress.

- Parents feel the Nursery and Reception classes give children a good start and say they really enjoy coming to school. A letter written to the inspection team supported this view wholeheartedly describing the staff as, 'caring above and beyond the call of duty'.
- Staff plan learning that engages and inspires children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Imaginative play and opportunities to develop social skills are well promoted, as could be seen when a group of nursery children built a train together from crates and curtains. In ensuring all had tickets and were safely seated before travelling they displayed good levels of cooperation and imagination. Activities are carefully structured to meet the needs of children whatever their starting points. As a result, the majority of children start in Year 1 having gained good levels of development across the curriculum.
- Staff work closely together to ensure extra sessions planned for pupils who need extra help with their learning result in those pupils making the same good progress as others in the school.
- Pupils' work is mostly marked diligently. However, the school's marking policy is not fully adhered to and so it is not always clear to pupils how they can improve their work. Also, time is not consistently set aside for pupils to correct and improve their work. As a result, errors are repeated and progress slows.
- Lessons in religious education, personal and social education and art and design promote pupils' good levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Learning is infrequently interrupted by incidents of difficult behaviour and pupils show caring and friendly attitudes to each other, staff and visitors.
- A caring approach to all is promoted throughout school and older pupils take great pride as 'gardeners' in supporting their younger 'seeds', taking responsibility for ensuring reception children settle into school life and are not alone in the playground.
- Although the vast majority of pupils are keen and eager to learn and show highly positive attitudes to their work, very occasionally, when teaching does not entirely capture pupils' full attention, behaviour dips.
- Most parents who completed the online questionnaire, Parent View, hold the view that behaviour in school is good and that their children are safe and happy. A small number disagreed with this view. The vast majority of parents support the work of the school leadership team.
- School records show that no pupils have been permanently excluded over the last three years. Incidents of difficult behaviour are few because of the effective way in which the behaviour policy is consistently applied across the school.
- Attendance is currently above the national average for similar schools due to the governors' and headteacher's strong stance on reducing holidays taken in term time and the work of both the school's part-time social worker and the learning mentor in supporting families to improve the attendance of their children.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils spoken to were clear about the different forms bullying can take. They feel incidents happen infrequently because staff ensure pupils are made aware of how to keep safe and where to turn should an incident happen inside or outside school.

The leadership and management are good

- The quality of leadership and management is good overall. The headteacher and senior leadership team have brought about much change. Their clear and focused vision for

improvement is shared by both staff and governors. As a result, good standards identified in the previous inspection have been maintained and built upon.

- The school has a clear plan for further improvement, which focuses on achieving excellence. Senior leaders have accurately identified those areas of the school's work which are in need of improvement and have set effective targets to reach their goals.
- The quality of teaching has continued to improve, as evidenced by the improvement in standards and what is on offer for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage since the previous inspection.
- Middle leaders monitor the quality of teaching in their subjects. This has contributed directly to improvement in pupils' achievement.
- The headteacher ensures performance targets for staff link directly to pupils' achievement and targets within the school's improvement plan. Checks on the performance of staff are undertaken regularly and this information has been used to make decisions on teachers' pay.
- The school's curriculum is well organised and subjects are clearly linked. Planned changes to the curriculum are in place ahead of the national deadline. Enrichment activities such as day and residential trips enhance learning by offering pupils a good range of opportunities and experiences away from the classroom. A much anticipated residential trip for Year 6 to an outward bound centre was described by one pupil as, 'The very best bit of Year 6.' The school has used its allocation of sports funding monies effectively to increase pupils' access to a diverse variety of different sports and improve their skills in, for example, tennis, tag rugby, orienteering and dance. Further funding from the Youth Sports Trust has increased the use of trained coaches who have enabled staff to have improved their own skills and knowledge in teaching physical education and this has contributed to pupils' healthy lifestyles.
- The local authority has much confidence in the leadership skills of senior leaders and has offered a light touch level of support over the last year.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governors have a good range of skills and experience, which they regularly update through undertaking further training. As a result, they have developed a clear understanding of pupils' achievement through their interpretation and understanding of national data and offer senior leaders good levels of support and challenge in their quest to bring about further improvement. In partnership with senior leaders, governors have developed an effective system for checking the performance of all staff, which rewards good teaching and addresses underperformance. They manage pupil premium funding prudently and this careful management has enabled them to support eligible pupils well. Safeguarding procedures and policies meet current 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	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. 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.

School details

Unique reference number	119648
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	443817

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	245
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Keiron Kelly
Headteacher	Kathleen McKeating
Date of previous school inspection	8 November 2010
Telephone number	01282 771146
Fax number	01282 776047
Email address	head@st-john.lancs.sch.uk

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