

St Paschal Baylon Catholic Primary School

Chelwood Avenue, Liverpool, Merseyside, L16 2LN

Inspection dates 11–12 June 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.

- School leaders responded quickly to the dip in progress and standards in 2013. As a result of their actions, pupils are now making good progress throughout the school.
- Achievement over time is good. From starting points in Reception that are broadly typical for their age, pupils make good progress and by the time they leave Year 6, attainment is typically above the national average level.
- Teaching is good. Teachers have very positive relationships with pupils and plan lessons that help to make learning interesting.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils are extremely polite and friendly and behave well in lessons and around school.
- Pupils say that they feel very safe and happy in school. Attendance is good because pupils enjoy coming to school.
- Parents are extremely supportive of the school and almost all say they would recommend the school to another parent.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well and they benefit from a well-designed curriculum that provides them with a wide range of experiences.
- The effective leadership of the headteacher and her deputy, ably supported by senior leaders, is making sure that teaching and pupils' achievement are moving forward strongly.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers' marking does not consistently make clear to pupils what they need to do to improve their work and this stops pupils from making the most rapid progress.
- Lessons do not always sufficiently challenge the most able pupils.
- Leaders' plans for improvement do not always make it clear how their impact on pupils' achievement will be measured.
- Despite governors understanding the broad thrust of data analysis, they do not use data well enough to judge the performance of different groups of pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 19 lessons or parts of lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading in Key Stages 1 and 2, and held meetings with pupils drawn from across Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and other leaders, including subject leaders, the Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator and the special educational needs coordinator. Inspectors met with a small group of governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors undertook a detailed scrutiny of pupils' current work, which was carried out jointly with the deputy headteacher.
- A range of other evidence was also considered by inspectors. This included the school's evaluation of its own performance, development planning, records of teachers' performance management, data about the achievement of pupils currently in the school, governing body information and records relating to attendance, behaviour and safeguarding.
- Inspectors took account of 44 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and a number of parents shared their views of the school with inspectors during the inspection.
- Inspectors analysed 25 returns by staff to the inspection questionnaire.

Inspection team

Neil Dixon, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Judith Tolley	Additional Inspector
Adrian Martin	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- 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 broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding to support pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, or who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school currently holds a number of awards, including Eco Schools accreditation and the International Schools Award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and so increase the rate of progress made by pupils across the school by:
 - improving the quality and consistency of marking so pupils know how to improve their work
 - ensuring that activities are always challenging enough for the most able pupils, so that they achieve to the very best of their ability.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - ensuring that plans for school improvement have clearer and more measurable targets linked to pupils' achievement, so school leaders can check their impact more effectively
 - developing governors' skills in checking on the progress of all groups of pupils, so that they can more stringently hold school leaders to account.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start school with skills and knowledge that are broadly typical for their age. They get off to a good start in Reception class, where they benefit from a well-planned and engaging curriculum and access to a well-resourced outdoor area. As a result, children make good progress and are well prepared for work in Year 1.
- Good progress is maintained in Key Stage 1 and standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2 have improved over the last three years and are now consistently at least similar to the national average, and in 2013 were above that level.
- Standards in Year 6 dipped from above average in previous years to average in reading and writing and just below average in mathematics in 2013. This was largely because fewer pupils in this group, particularly the most able, made better than the expected amount of progress. Inspection evidence shows that the school has successfully reversed this decline and the attainment of pupils in the current Year 6 class is now above average overall.
- Pupils' progress in reading is good. Recent improvements in the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) are helping to accelerate pupils' progress. As a result, by the end of Year 2, pupils read willingly and with confidence and are able to use their knowledge of phonics to help them decode new words.
- Pupils make good progress in writing. Pupils in Key Stage 1 show a good understanding of key aspects of punctuation and grammar, such as speech marks and exclamation marks. This good progress continues across Key Stage 2 so that, by the end of Year 6, pupils are able to write fluently and confidently in a range of different styles.
- Achievement in mathematics is good. Pupils use their basic numeracy skills well and are confident when tackling problem-solving tasks.
- Overall, the most able pupils make good progress. While the number of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 dipped last year, the proportion of pupils currently in Year 6 who are working at the higher level has increased and is now at least similar to that found nationally. However, across the school, there are occasions when the most able pupils are not given work that challenges them sufficiently and this stops them from making even better progress.
- All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabled pupils, those from minority ethnic groups and those with a first language other than English, make good progress during their time in the school and achieve well. This is indicative of the school's effective promotion of equal opportunities.
- The funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium is being used effectively, so that the attainment and progress of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly similar to the national average for this group. Within school, they are half a term behind their classmates in English and mathematics and the gap is closing at a good rate.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good overall, and as a result, pupils make good progress.
- Teachers know how well pupils in their classes are working and are able to plan work that they find interesting and engaging. The positive relationships between teachers and pupils are a strength of the school.
- Children are taught well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Good use is made of the extensive facilities, especially those outdoors where children learn with great enthusiasm. Teachers plan a wide range of engaging activities that the children tackle independently or with adult support. Children talk confidently about what they are doing and are keen to share what they have found out.
- Pupils respond very well to teachers' high expectations and work at tasks that help them to make at least good progress. For example, in Year 6 pupils made rapid progress in their writing,

using different features of persuasive writing in their letters to the local council. They responded well to suggestions from their teacher and very effectively assessed each other's work against the goals the teacher had set for them. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to stretch the thinking of the most able pupils.

- Teachers, well supported by skilled and knowledgeable teaching assistants, demonstrate good subject knowledge across the curriculum. The work that they planned, for example based on a 'circus' theme in Reception class and that about Greece in Year 4, interests and engages the children whatever their ability or individual starting points.
- Reading is taught effectively, and pupils across Key Stages 1 and 2 are provided with plenty of opportunities to develop their reading skills across the curriculum, such as when conducting research about different topics. The teaching of phonics is closely matched to pupils' current levels of understanding and as a result, pupils' progress in phonics is improving.
- Although the quality of marking is improving, it is not always consistent across different classes and year groups. As a result, pupils are not always clear about what they should do to improve their work, and therefore marking does not accelerate pupils' progress as much as it could do.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils say that poor behaviour hardly ever happens in their school. Members of the local community speak highly of the pupils' behaviour during shared events, such as the Celebration Mass, and one commented that it was, 'A pleasure to be involved with the school.'
- Pupils are very polite and welcoming. At lunchtimes and playtimes, pupils mix well and get on with each other, and their play is supported very effectively by older pupils acting as 'Baylon Buddies'.
- Pupils show positive attitudes to learning. Attractive displays of art and written work around the school, linked to different themes, show that most pupils take great pride in their work. In class, pupils cooperate well together and behaviour in lessons is consistently good, although not better than that because a small minority of pupils do not take enough care with their presentation and some do not respond to comments in teachers' marking.
- Pupils enjoy having the opportunity to take responsibility for aspects of school life, and the school council has been very effective in helping to organise healthy snacks and raise money for different charities.
- Attendance over time is good and persistent absenteeism is below average because pupils are happy coming to school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel very safe in the school and can confidently explain how to keep themselves safe in different situations, including when using the internet. Displays around school further reinforce messages for the pupils about staying safe online.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of different forms of bullying, including name-calling and racist bullying, but say that incidents of bullying in their school are extremely rare, and all are confident that the adults in school would deal effectively with any problems or concerns that they may have.
- Parents' responses to the 'Parent View' online survey, and informal discussions with inspectors during the inspection, show that parents are very pleased with the standard of behaviour and safety in the school. Almost all of the parents who responded to 'Parent View' said that they would recommend the school to another parent and one parent's comment, 'It's so lovely as a parent to know your child is happy and is learning,' clearly reflected the views of the vast majority of parents.

The leadership and management are good

- The school is well led by the headteacher and senior leaders. They have the full support of the staff, who say that the school is a good place to work.
- School leaders recognised that there had been a dip in results in Key Stage 2 in 2013 and responded effectively to it. They identified key priorities for improvement and strategies that they have since put in place, such as increasing the school's focus on the teaching of basic skills in English and mathematics, have had an immediate impact on the achievement of pupils currently in the school, which is good.
- Leaders with responsibility for different subjects play an effective part in checking on the quality of pupils' work and progress that pupils are making across the curriculum, and in identifying areas that could be improved. The school's plans for improvement therefore concentrate on the right areas. However, these plans do not identify sufficiently clearly how school leaders intend to check on their impact on pupils' achievement.
- Regular checks are made on the quality and impact of teaching and the headteacher and her deputy have an accurate view of the strengths in teaching across the school and aspects where it could be improved. School leaders have effectively identified staff development needs, linked to priorities for school improvement. For example, support for staff in looking at ways of developing pupils' writing has improved the quality of the teaching of writing and is having a positive impact on the standard of pupils' writing across the school.
- Targets set for teachers' performance are linked to pupil progress and attainment, and there is a clear link between teachers' pay and performance.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, as is evident in the quality of pupils' artwork on display in school, the close links that the school has with its church and parishioners and the high level of care that pupils show for each other and for the school building and grounds.
- The curriculum provides good and engaging learning opportunities for all pupils, whatever their starting points or academic ability. It is very well enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular clubs, including sporting clubs, dance and cookery.
- The school makes effective use of the additional funding for primary school sport, which has built on the school's proud tradition of sporting success. Specialist coaches provide pupils with engaging and energetic sport and dance sessions and also help to develop teachers' skills and confidence.
- The local authority provides the school with 'light touch' support and encourages it to share its strengths, such as the quality of outdoor provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, with neighbouring schools.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They provide appropriate challenge to school leaders, as was evident in the establishment of a committee to monitor standards and achievement in response to the dip in results in Year 6 in 2013. Governors have a good overview of data relating to the school's performance, but do not currently look in sufficient detail at information relating to the achievement of different groups of pupils.
 - Governors, working closely with senior leaders, ensure that the school's finances are well managed and enhance the quality of learning for pupils. They have created an attractive and practical learning environment, both inside and in the school grounds, of which staff and pupils are justifiably proud.
 - Governors are aware of how pupil premium funding is used and the impact that it is having on pupils' progress. They ensure that the statutory duties of the governing body are fulfilled, particularly with regard to safeguarding and checks on procedures for managing teachers' performance.

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	104679
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	439530

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	369
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joan Brookman
Headteacher	Clair Knowles
Date of previous school inspection	28 January 2009
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