

Great Crosby Catholic Primary School

The Northern Road, Sefton, Crosby, Liverpool, Merseyside , L23 2RQ

Inspection dates 17–18 April 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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' behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding.
- Achievement is good. Pupils make good progress and reach above average standards in English and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching is good and pupils learn well.
- Teaching is particularly strong in Year 6. As a result, pupils make outstanding progress in these classes.
- The headteacher and senior leaders successfully communicate high expectations and ambition for the school. They work effectively to ensure that the school continues to improve further and to be the best it can be.
- The school's checks on the quality of teaching are thorough and lead to high quality training so that teaching improves. The school successfully supports other schools and trains their teachers.
- The governing body provides strong support and challenge to the school. Governors know the school well and help to make sure pupils are safe and achieve well.
- Parents hold the school in high regard and nearly all parents would recommend the school to another parent.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always use the information about pupils' previous learning to plan activities in lessons that accurately meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. As a result, pupils make good rather than outstanding progress in most year groups.
- Teachers are not consistently providing clear and helpful advice when marking pupils' books. Some mistakes are not addressed fully and pupils do not always act upon their teachers' written comments.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 29 lessons taught by 28 teachers. In addition, they conducted some shorter visits to classes to check the quality of the curriculum. Two lessons were jointly observed, one with the headteacher and the other with the deputy headteacher. Six pupils were heard to read by inspectors.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, other senior and subject leaders, the coordinator of provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, the coordinator of the Early Years Foundation Stage, four members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 81 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's own records of parents' views.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including safeguarding policies, school development plans, the school's records of checks on the quality of teaching and samples of pupils' work.

Inspection team

Liam Trippier, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Terry Bond	Additional Inspector
Sheila Mawer	Additional Inspector
Peter McKay	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and very few speak English as an additional language.
- A below average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium (this is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after).
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportions of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or supported at school action plus are also below average.
- The school exceeds the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school accommodates and runs a breakfast club that is attended by approximately 80 children from the school.
- The school provides support to improve teaching, achievement and leadership in other schools through its role as a National Support School and was recently awarded Teaching School status.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that its impact on pupils' achievement throughout the school and over time is outstanding by:
 - ensuring teachers use the information about how well pupils have learned to plan activities that precisely meet pupils' different needs, particularly to make more-able pupils think things out for themselves
 - ensuring teachers' marking in pupils' workbooks, particularly in mathematics and writing, regularly identifies the next steps for pupils to take to improve their work, and time is given to address them.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most pupils start this school with skills, knowledge and understanding expected for their age. Throughout the school pupils make good progress in English and mathematics although the rate of progress pupils make in different year groups and classes is uneven.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage children learn well both indoors and outside through the good range of activities taught by adults and chosen by the children themselves. They really enjoy learning to write in the play area set up as a veterinary practice. However, more-able children complete some activities easily without having to think particularly hard.
- Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and learn to read well. They read unfamiliar words by applying their understanding of letters and the sounds they make (phonics), and read regularly. Currently, standards in Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics are average but some more-able pupils are not reaching the higher levels they are capable of, particularly in writing.
- Over time, all groups of pupils make good progress throughout Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics although the rate of progress varies from class to class, dependent on the quality of teaching. Pupils, including the few who speak English as an additional language, reach above average standards in English and mathematics. In Year 6, pupils make rapid and sustained progress in all subjects because they are taught exceptionally well.
- Recent improvements in the teaching of reading are having a positive effect on pupils' enjoyment of and achievement in reading. Older pupils read widely across a range of subjects and do so with great enthusiasm. They have a well-developed knowledge of a wide range of authors and types of books.
- All groups of pupils have equal opportunity to learn. The school uses well the additional funding received for those known to be eligible for the pupil premium. These pupils make good progress in both English and mathematics and by the end of Key Stage 2 the attainment gap has narrowed to be just over two terms behind other pupils. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also make good progress. These groups of pupils benefit from good teaching to meet their needs in small groups and in their classes.

The quality of teaching is good

- Nearly all teaching is of good quality and some is outstanding. As a result, pupils make good progress over time in English and mathematics. In the best lessons, pupils learn exceptionally well because teachers carefully plan activities that are well matched to pupils' abilities and ensure pupils have to think hard.
- In a mathematics lesson pupils made outstanding progress as a result of excellent teaching. Pupils were fully involved and successful in finding and investigating the surface area of shapes. The teacher used an internet-based competition and thought-provoking activities that built well upon previous learning. The teacher carefully checked the progress of pupils during the lesson and ensured all took part and fully understood their tasks.
- In most lessons pupils learn quickly and are involved in interesting activities. Teachers provide pupils with ample opportunities to practise and develop literacy and numeracy skills in a range of subjects. The support from teaching assistants is effective in developing pupils' understanding. Teachers encourage pupils to explain their answers in detail to check their understanding is secure and address any errors.
- In some lessons, the work set for pupils is not matched closely enough to their abilities. As a result, more-able pupils find the work too easy or others find it too difficult. When this happens pupils do not make rapid progress.
- The quality of marking in pupils' workbooks is inconsistent and this contributes to the uneven rate of progress pupils make throughout the school, particularly in mathematics and writing. Some teachers mark pupils' work carefully, ensuring pupils have time to act upon the advice

given but sometimes copying and spelling mistakes are overlooked. In some classes, pupils are provided with targets in their workbooks but in others they are not. As a result, some pupils are not sure how to improve their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils behave exceptionally well in lessons, around the school building and out of school. They make an excellent contribution to their own learning. They enjoy taking part in all activities and respond enthusiastically when they are selected to work with adults or in discussion groups. Relationships are strong and staff are wonderful role models, providing a supportive and warm ethos in which pupils can feel safe and behave and achieve well.
- Pupils are polite and courteous to staff, visitors and each other. Unprompted, they help each other in lessons and at playtimes, making sure their friends are involved in games and activities. In the breakfast club, pupils enjoy the excellent range of activities and like eating their breakfasts, chatting sociably and calmly with each other and staff before school starts.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel very safe in school and speak positively about their experiences. They have a strong awareness of different types of bullying and know how to keep themselves safe, especially when using the internet. Pupils are well informed about safety issues and are confident that staff will support and help them if they have an issue regarding their safety.
- Parents, staff and pupils recognise that behaviour is typically excellent. Some pupils say that there is occasional name-calling but that it is not serious and is dealt with well by staff. Pupils who have difficulty behaving well are provided with exceptional support to bring about great improvements to their conduct.
- Pupils' above average rates of attendance reflect their enjoyment of school and their families' commitment to education. Pupils understand why they should attend school regularly and appreciate the awards for good attendance each term.

The leadership and management are good

- Senior and middle leaders have a thorough understanding of the school's key strengths and areas for development because they make regular checks on the quality of teaching in the school to ensure good progress is made by pupils. They check teachers' planning, pupils' workbooks and analyse test scores at regular intervals, identifying appropriate targets for improvement.
- Development plans provide a clear set of actions for the school to follow and ensure the quality of teaching over time is at least good. However, plans are not linked closely to pupils' achievement and some actions are not set in a tight enough timescale so they can be carefully checked. This sometimes leads to a lack of clarity about the achievement of some groups of pupils in the school.
- Teachers are regularly held to account for the achievement of pupils in their classes to ensure good progress is made. The school has made sure that the government's expected standards for teachers are understood and performance management arrangements are robust. Staff are supported very well through training provided by the school and other organisations. Some variations in the quality of teaching currently prevent the school from realising its vision of outstanding achievement throughout the school.
- The school successfully trains teachers through strong and effective partnerships with several local universities. As part of the Teaching School and National Support School roles, staff provide highly effective support to other schools, helping them to improve quickly.
- The curriculum is well organised and promotes good achievement. Some aspects of the curriculum provide highly positive and rich experiences and many pupils thoroughly enjoy playing musical instruments in the school orchestra and singing in the choir. Pupils develop a

good understanding and knowledge of the topics they are taught, benefiting from the many trips and visitors their teachers organise. The school offers a suitable range of after-school clubs that meet the interests of the pupils.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through the curriculum. They enthusiastically join in activities that require teamwork such as on the successful school football team and when discussing their work with each other in lessons. They demonstrate a sound understanding of other faiths and cultures and have a keen sense of right and wrong.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils fully meet statutory requirements.
- The local authority provides appropriate 'light touch' support for this good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know well the school's strengths and areas for development because they receive good quality information from leaders and see the school in operation on a regular basis, checking the achievement and quality of teaching for themselves.
 - The governing body fulfils its statutory duties well and provides appropriate challenge and support for the school. Governors ensure safeguarding policies and procedures are up to date and promote equality of opportunity, knowing well how different groups of pupils are achieving in the school. For example, governors ensure that resources to support pupils eligible for the pupil premium are used efficiently to raise their achievement. Governors know that the school's performance management procedures are effective and are linked to teachers' salary progression.

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	104926
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	412472

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	694
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Monsignor John Furnival
Headteacher	Mrs Pat Speed
Date of previous school inspection	6 May 2009
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