

St Bernadette's Catholic Primary Voluntary Academy

Annes Cresent, Ashby , Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire, DN16 2LW

Inspection dates

5–6 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Outstanding 1
Achievement of pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management	Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils' attainment is outstanding and has been so in four out of the past five years. For the year 2012, the national assessment results showed that Year 6 pupils were a year ahead of what is generally expected of them.
- In 2011 and again 2012, the progress made by pupils from the time they were seven years of age to the end of Year 6 was shown to be in the top 2% of school's nationally.
- Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, those who speak English as an additional language and those who are entitled to the pupil premium also make outstanding progress.
- The school's excellent systems for keeping track of pupils' progress indicate that these high standards are set to continue. Currently, pupils' achievement in reading and mathematics slightly outstrips that of writing.
- In almost half the lessons seen, teaching was outstanding. The work and activities provided in lessons meet the needs and interests of pupils of all levels of ability. Pupils thrive on challenging questions and finding things out for themselves.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage but the provision is not yet as well developed as the school would like.
- Pupils are proud of their school and all of those connected to it. There are excellent relationships between pupils and adults. Pupils are eager to learn and their behaviour in, and outside, classrooms is exemplary.
- Pupils willingly take on roles of responsibility because they believe it is a way of giving something back to the school for all the support, help and friendship adults offer them.
- Outstanding leadership has led to marked improvements in all areas of school life since the time of the last inspection. Leaders and managers at all levels, including governors, are exceptionally successful at driving the school forward.
- The checking of teaching and learning is extremely rigorous and information gained from these activities is used astutely to improve their quality.
- Governors have an accurate view of how well the school is doing. They support the school and hold it to account with rigour.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons of which four were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with pupils from Year 2 to Year 6, the governing body, senior and middle leaders and an external consultant appointed by the school. Short discussions were held with pupils at break times and lunchtime.
- The inspectors took account of 28 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and took into account the work in pupils' books, the school's own data on pupils' current progress, the school's improvement plans, planning and monitoring information and minutes of governing body meetings. Records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding were also considered.

Inspection team

Anthony Kingston, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Paul Plumridge	Additional Inspector
Claire Fisher	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Bernadette's is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- St Bernadette's Catholic Primary Voluntary Academy converted to become an academy on 1 April 2012. When its predecessor school, St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be good.
- Since the previous inspection the school has experienced many changes in staffing including the headteacher.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and the children of families in the armed forces, is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language is average.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the usual time is average.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which set the government's expectations for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Maintain the continuing rise in pupils' attainment, especially in writing, by encouraging and expecting pupils to write at greater length across a range of subjects other than English.
- Make further improvement to the Early Years Foundation Stage by developing outdoor provision in line with the school's current plans.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- On entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage most children's skills are well below those typically expected for their age, especially in language and personal and social development. Although children enter Year 1 with attainment which is below average this reflects good progress from their low starting points. However, while provision for learning is good it is not yet as well developed as the school would like, especially outdoors.
- Throughout Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2 this good and sometimes outstanding progress continues. In Years 5 and 6, progress accelerates even more rapidly. In 2011 and again in 2012, this resulted in the progress made by pupils in English and mathematics being in the top 2% of schools nationally. This outstanding progress has resulted in levels of attainment in English and mathematics being significantly above the national average in four out of the last five years. Attainment in reading and mathematics is slightly higher than writing but the gap is narrowing rapidly.
- Pupils' reading skills are developed extremely well. Systematic teaching of letters and sounds in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is giving pupils the skills they need to tackle unfamiliar words confidently. This is reflected in the well-above average proportion of pupils aged six who achieved the national expectation in a check of their understanding of the sounds that letters make. Pupils quickly move on to gain personal enjoyment from reading books independently and show a mature ability to discuss moral and ethical issues within the text. This was exemplified by one pupil who said, 'Charlotte's Web taught me about friendship and death and that time heals all wounds.'
- Pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs make progress similar to that of their classmates. Their progress is checked carefully and programmes of work are planned to help them improve. Pupils joining the school who speak English as an additional language quickly learn how to communicate their needs and make good progress because of the emphasis placed on speaking and listening and the effective support of all adults.
- The group of pupils supported by the pupil premium flourish. They make outstanding progress in English and mathematics. This includes pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. Their performance in English and mathematics is equal to that of, and sometimes better than, their fellow pupils.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teaching is outstanding over time and this is reflected in the continued rise in pupils' achievement since the previous inspection. Almost half of the lessons observed were outstanding. Teachers have high expectations and make learning fun. This has helped pupils to develop outstanding attitudes to learning. Lessons are well planned and structured. This is because the accurate tracking of pupils' progress means that their needs are well known. The effective use of this information enables work to be planned to meet the needs of all pupils.
- In the best lessons, enormous respect is given to pupils' ideas and opinions. Teachers' excellent questioning skills enable them to swiftly assess pupils' learning, adapting their teaching, when necessary, to ensure pupils have a thorough understanding of the concept being taught.
- In some year groups, especially Year 6, lessons start with a challenge, often in the form of a question. This encourages pupil-initiated responses which enable pupils to predict, theorise and hypothesise. Pupils relish this involvement in their learning, resulting in high levels of engagement, interest and understanding. For example, a Year 6 pupil investigating sources of energy said that 'Energy comes from a variety of sources, some renewable and some finite. The problem for the future is to create technology which could create power from renewable sources and which everyone could afford'.
- The school has invested in high levels of teaching assistants to support pupils' learning in, and

outside, the classroom. They liaise closely with teachers and are often responsible for small group and one-to-one tuition. They are highly effective in giving pupils a boost to their learning. This work is carefully monitored, ensuring that no pupils fall behind in their work and each being given excellent opportunities to achieve their best.

- Pupils' work is marked regularly and thoroughly. They are given detailed and challenging pointers about how to improve their work. All pupils know their targets for improvement and are eager to talk about exactly what it is they need to do to improve. Many have high aspirations and express a desire to beat the already high expectations set by their teachers.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The school provides an exceptionally caring and supportive environment in which all pupils are valued.
- Teachers manage behaviour extremely well and resolve issues swiftly and quietly. Relationships between pupils and adults are excellent. Pupils are carefully nurtured as individuals and those with behavioural difficulties learn how to regulate their own behaviour. They are aware of all the different forms of bullying, reflect on the impact of their actions on others and take full responsibility for their personal conduct. Consequently, incidents of bullying are very rare.
- Pupils are confident in sharing their concerns because they know that they will be listened to. They feel safe in school and know who to turn to if they are worried about anything. They know how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet.
- Highly positive relationships, a wide range of visits and a variety of after-school clubs make a strong contribution to pupils' outstanding social development. They have a high regard and level of respect for others' cultures and beliefs. They understand their rights and responsibilities and willingly take on jobs around the school because, as one pupil pointed out, 'it's a way of saying thank you for everything our teachers do for us.'
- The work of the Nurture Support Worker has been effective in improving communication between home and school. She has worked well with the school to improve pupils' attendance as well as helping parents resolve any difficulties which could adversely affect their child's performance at school.
- Attendance is above average.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The quiet, calm but strong and determined leadership given by the headteacher provides a crystal clear vision. She is supported fully by all staff in her resolve to strive for the best. Well-established high achievement for pupils has been maintained and has recently been pushed to yet greater levels of excellence.
- Leaders at all levels are effective. Their sharply focused and rigorous checks on teaching and learning give staff clear guidance on how to improve, driving improvement forward by tackling weaknesses quickly and successfully through well-planned training for teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils' progress is checked extremely carefully. Any underachievement is identified quickly and actions are taken to provide additional support.
- The school is meticulous in keeping track of the progress that individual pupils make, continually checking that all pupils have equal opportunities for success. The progress of pupils entitled to benefit from pupil premium funding, those with disabilities or have special educational needs and those who are new to English is checked very carefully. Where there is any concern that a pupil is falling behind appropriate support is swiftly put in place to ensure they achieve equally as well as their classmates.
- The curriculum captures pupils' interests. It is enriched by visits and visitors and a wide range of musical, sporting and cultural activities such as the long-standing link with a school in China.

However, although the curriculum rightly focuses on the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics and makes creative links between different subject areas, pupils are often restricted in the amount they can write because of teacher-prepared templates.

- Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Through a rich and varied range of activities pupils gain an understanding and respect for other cultures and an appreciation of the spiritual dimension of life.
- The local authority is aware of this school's qualities. An external consultant, appointed by the school, monitors the school's effectiveness. The school greatly appreciates this support and expertise.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors champion the school. They have an excellent understanding of data and, through frequent formal and informal visits, they have become increasingly aware of the quality of teaching and how it relates to pupils' progress. As a result, governors have a very accurate view of how well the school is doing and are able to challenge leaders rigorously. Governors keep a close eye on the allocation and impact of any spending, including the pupil premium funding. Governors ensure that reviews of teachers' work are linked closely to the progress and attainment of all pupils, to the standards expected of teachers and to the pay scales that teachers are on. Safeguarding has a high priority and they ensure that statutory requirements are met.
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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	138016
Local authority	North Lincolnshire
Inspection number	403725

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	316
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Moran
Headteacher	Josephine Sulkowski
Date of previous school inspection	10 January 2008
Telephone number	01724 842382
Fax number	01724 281089
Email address	admin.saintbernadettes@northlincs.gov.uk

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