

St Alphonsus' RC Primary School

Cadogan Street, North Ormesby, Middlesbrough, TS3 6PX

Inspection dates 16–17 October 2012

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| 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.

- This very welcoming and caring school ensures that all pupils are treated as individuals and helped to do their best.
- A large majority of pupils make good progress and learn well. Pupils' progress in reading is outstanding.
- Teaching is good because teaching staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and academic achievement.
- Pupils behave very well and show high levels of respect to each other and adults. They are very motivated to learn. Their attendance and punctuality have recently improved from below average to above average.
- School leaders invest a lot of time and money in the professional development of staff. This has been rewarded with better quality teaching leading to pupils' standards in reading, writing and mathematics improving rapidly and securely.
- All staff and the governing body have the drive and capacity to ensure that this school continues to make at least good progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding.
- The progress lower-attaining pupils make in writing in Key Stage 2 requires improvement.
- The governing body does not hold those teachers who have a responsibility for a subject area rigorously enough to account.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 12 lessons, of which one was a joint observation with the headteacher. In addition, the inspection team made a number of other short visits to lessons and small group sessions.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor, a representative of the local authority, all teaching staff and some parents.
- Inspectors took account of the seven responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's recent parental survey.
- They observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Barbara Hudson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Geoffrey Seagrove

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is average. These pupils come mostly from Africa, Romania, China, India and Pakistan. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is, however, below average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching by:
 - reducing the time pupils spend listening to teachers talk
 - ensuring that the time pupils are given to complete an activity is not too long
 - ensuring that teachers' advice about how pupils can improve their work is clearer
 - providing more time for pupils to work on specific skills that they need to improve most.
- Accelerate progress in writing for lower-attaining pupils in Key Stage 2 by:
 - ensuring that pupils apply their knowledge of letter sounds to their spellings when they are writing
 - increasing the length of the sentences that they write
 - asking pupils to say what they are going to write before they write it.
- Make sure that the governing body holds those teachers with a subject responsibility other than for English and mathematics more rigorously to account by:
 - making better use of those governors who oversee subjects other than English and mathematics
 - making sure that those teachers with a subject responsibility other than English and mathematics report in detail and more regularly on pupils' achievement in their subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most pupils achieve well in all subjects. They thrive in a caring, nurturing, learning environment. This excellent environment ensures that most pupils become confident, motivated learners.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get a good start to their school experiences. Children joining the Nursery Year often do so with skills and abilities that are well below those typically seen for their age. They make outstanding progress in speaking and listening and their personal and social development. In all other areas of learning children make good progress.
- In Key Stage 1, pupils build upon the good start that they have had in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make good progress in writing and mathematics to reach standards that are below average by the end of Year 2. In reading, pupils' progress is outstanding. By the end of Year 2 a large majority of pupils are reaching the standards expected for their age.
- In Key Stage 2 most pupils make good progress to reach standards that are above average in reading and mathematics. In writing, standards are below average. It is the lower-ability pupils in Key Stage 2 whose progress most requires improvement. However, inspection evidence found that their progress is improving quickly because of the well-tailored support for individuals and small groups of pupils.
- The progress of pupils supported by the pupil premium and those with special educational needs is good in reading and mathematics. It is improving in writing because of a wide range of activities that are helping them to improve their spelling and the length of the sentences that they write. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make good progress. Those pupils learning English as an additional language are provided with a wide range of speaking and listening activities to help them learn English quickly and their overall progress is also good.

The quality of teaching is good

- The good overall quality of teaching is appreciated by the pupils and their parents. Pupils find their lessons interesting. Teaching staff use praise very effectively to motivate and encourage pupils to do their best. However, not enough teaching is yet outstanding. The strengths in the good teaching are:
 - the very positive relationships between staff and pupils
 - the well-embedded routines that ensure that little time for learning is lost
 - teaching staff know their pupils very well and in most lessons the work pupils are given to do is very well matched to their ability and provides sufficient challenge to make them think
 - teaching staff have high expectations for pupils and plan lessons that are very focused on what pupils are to learn and how they can succeed in their learning
 - teaching staff effectively promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through creating a very positive environment and providing many opportunities for pupils to work with a partner or in small groups
 - the identification of pupils who need additional support or who are falling behind is effective. The way in which different activities are being used to support these pupils is having a very positive impact on ensuring most pupils are making good progress.
- Where teaching is not outstanding:
 - pupils sometimes spend too long listening to their teachers
 - pupils occasionally are given too long to complete an activity which means that they do not get as much work done as they might
 - the work that the lower-ability pupils are given to do in writing is not always as well matched to their ability as it could be
 - the marking of pupils' work does not inform pupils clearly enough how they can improve their

work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are very motivated and have very positive attitudes to work. They are very thoughtful and show great consideration for each other and adults. When talking to the inspectors the pride that they have for their school and their achievements shone through.
- Teachers' high expectations, consistent approaches and their excellent modelling of what is expected help pupils to behave very well.
- Adults respond exceptionally well to individual pupils' needs. The input of the parent support adviser is invaluable in helping pupils to improve their attitudes to learning and the progress they make.
- Attendance and punctuality have improved significantly from below average to above average because the school has been exceptionally rigorous in tackling poor attendance.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the various forms of bullying. They say that when bullying does occur they feel confident that they can tell a member of staff and they will sort it out quickly and effectively.
- Pupils say that they feel very safe in school. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe in school, in their community and while using the internet.
- All parents feel that pupils' behaviour is good.

The leadership and management are good

- The inspirational headteacher, with the support of a very able deputy headteacher, has worked tirelessly to create an effective team of leaders, managers and governors who have the ambition, determination and the overall expertise to continue to improve this good school.
- The school places individual children at the centre of its work. Staff are very careful in ensuring that pupils have equality of opportunity and no one is discriminated against.
- The improvements to teaching have been very effective. The investment in high quality professional development and the willingness of staff to take on and implement new ideas are ensuring that teaching is continually improving. This is also followed up with rigorous evaluations of the quality of teaching and effective feedback to help teaching staff to improve their work. This information is used very effectively in the performance management of the teaching staff.
- The rigorous analysis of pupils' progress and the standards they achieve are effective. This information is used well to highlight the school's successes and where it needs to improve. Where weaknesses are found the teaching staff quickly respond to them. A good example of this is the way in which the school is improving the progress of lower-ability pupils in Key Stage 2, through carefully planned individual and small group activities.
- Teachers who have a responsibility for a subject effectively collect information and analyse pupils' attainment and progress for their subject. This is having a positive impact on ensuring that the pupils' achievement in one subject does not lag behind another. However, subject leaders apart from those who lead English and mathematics do not sufficiently report to the governing body on pupils' performance.
- Good financial management ensures that the school gets good value for money. The use of the pupil premium funding is rigorously evaluated to ensure that it is having a positive impact on pupils' progress.
- In the recent past, the local authority has provided effective, more regular support for the school while it was improving pupils' progress. This level of support has decreased as the school has improved.
- The staff and governors are forging many positive links with many parents. Most parents are

very supportive of the school.

■ The school evaluates its effectiveness accurately.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body is fully aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and challenges appropriately to bring about improvement.
 - The governing body holds the school to account very well except for evaluating the impact of those teachers with a subject responsibility other than English and mathematics.
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What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 111715 |
| Local authority | Middlesbrough |
| Inspection number | 405354 |

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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| 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 | 220 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Jane Wordsworth |
| Headteacher | Eileen Paul |
| Date of previous school inspection | 8 December 2010 |
| Telephone number | 01642 243400 |
| Fax number | 01642 243400 |
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