

# Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Primary School

Pigeon Cote Road, Seacroft, Leeds, LS14 1EP

**Inspection dates** 16–17 September 2014

|                                |                      |                      |          |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Outstanding          | 1        |
|                                | This inspection:     | <b>Good</b>          | <b>2</b> |
| Leadership and management      |                      | Good                 | 2        |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils |                      | Outstanding          | 1        |
| Quality of teaching            |                      | Good                 | 2        |
| Achievement of pupils          |                      | Good                 | 2        |
| Early years provision          |                      | Requires improvement | 3        |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- All leaders are strongly committed to improving the school and all staff and parents fully support the school's leadership.
- The management of teaching and learning by leaders is both rigorous and effective. It has strengthened teaching and raised standards in general over time.
- Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning are outstanding. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development overall is excellent and they feel entirely safe in school.
- Teaching quality is good overall. Some teaching is outstanding. Pupils are challenged to do their best and expectations are high.
- Pupils achieve well from their mostly below typical starting points. Standards at the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics are generally above average and are improving.
- The quality of care provided for pupils is exceptional. Parents speak very highly of the learning and pastoral support given to vulnerable pupils and their families.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Over time, too few children in the Early Years have made the progress they should, especially in their development of mathematical and communication skills. Leadership has been unsettled.
- Standards in mathematics at the end of Year 2 are not as high as those seen in reading and writing.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 11 lessons and part-lessons, three of which were seen jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the governing body, members of staff, pupils, parents and a representative from the local authority.
- Also taken into account were 27 responses from parents via Ofsted’s on-line survey (Parent View), as well as questionnaires completed by staff members.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and examined a range of documentation that included: national assessment data and the school’s own assessments; curriculum and safeguarding information; the school’s own view of its work; minutes from governing body meetings and pupils’ work.

## Inspection team

Kevin Johnson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Janet Keefe

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is an average-sized school in which the majority of pupils are White British.
- A well above average proportion of pupils is disadvantaged and therefore supported by pupil premium funding. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action only is broadly average.
- A similar proportion is supported by school action plus or has a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets the current floor standards which are the government's minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6.
- A breakfast club is provided by the school during term time.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that leadership in the Early Years is firmly established.
- Ensure that the urgency of learning in the Early Years in the areas of mathematical and literacy skills is increased by planning well-focused activities and checking progress rigorously.
- Raise standards in mathematics at the end of Year 2 so that they are at least as good as the standards in reading and writing, by making sure that pupils learn a wide range of methods to use when solving number problems during their early years, and that their understanding of number is secure before they move to the next stage.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and senior leaders work effectively to check the quality of the school's work and have an accurate view of its success and what needs to be done next.
- Together they provide strong role models and clear direction for staff whose teamwork and commitment to school improvement is unquestionable.
- Leadership in the Early Years has been unsettled in the past and there have been changes in staffing. Governors and school leaders have worked hard to rectify this situation. New appointments are already making a positive difference, but it is too early to judge the final outcomes for children currently in the Reception class.
- Continual improvements to the quality of teaching and learning are central to the school's drive to maintain standards. The management of teachers' performance is rigorous. Areas for improvement are quickly identified and there is well-planned training and support for the continuous development of teachers' subject knowledge and skills.
- Middle leaders responsible for individual subjects maintain a broad and interesting curriculum. It provides good opportunities for pupils to learn and test their ideas and skills in different ways. Opportunities for pupils to develop skills and personal qualities outside of lesson times are numerous. The curriculum supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well and prepares them exceptionally well for life in Britain as members of their community.
- Sport funding allocated to the school is used very effectively. It has brought a significant increase in pupils' activities, including competitive sports. Teachers work alongside physical education specialists to improve their own teaching skills in the subject. Some outstanding provision was seen during the inspection.
- Recently the school has worked productively with the local authority to maintain standards in leadership and teaching quality in the school, following an unusual dip in standards in 2013. The level of local authority support has now been reduced. This reflects local authority confidence in the school's leadership and ability to manage further improvement independently.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance of the school is good. Governors know the school and the community that it serves very well. They challenge and support the school effectively in its drive to provide equality of opportunity and good learning for all pupils. A successful measure has been the funding of resources both in school and for use by parents, for the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make). This action brought about a significant increase in the proportion of pupils in Year 1 who reached the expected standard in the 2014 national screening check. Governors gain a clear understanding of the school's academic performance by checking results and comparing them with the national picture. They question the school about assessment data, especially the performance of pupils supported by the pupil premium. Governors have a clear overview of teachers' performance and how it is managed. They are familiar with the expectations of the Teachers' Standards and how classroom performances are linked to the school's salaries structure. Finances, including the use of sport funding are managed efficiently, as are other statutory duties. Arrangements for safeguarding meet all requirements.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- They show their enjoyment of school and excellent attitudes to learning by their above average attendance and punctuality to lessons.
- In lessons, they are always attentive and hard-working. They finish their work on time and it is neatly presented.
- Pupils enjoy working with others to try out ideas and solve problems. They are always keen to share ideas and do so confidently when answering questions or reading aloud.
- Around the school, pupils are equally well-behaved and take responsibility for their own conduct. When asked, they judged their behaviour overall to be nine out of ten. They are extremely mindful of the school's strong Christian values in all of their dealings with others. They behave impeccably during assemblies and are invariably polite and well-mannered towards each other and adults.
- Pupils enjoy the 'good to be green' system they have in school which, they say, helps them to 'think twice' about what they do.

- Pupils contribute greatly to the everyday life of the school. They are neatly dressed in their uniforms and are noteworthy ambassadors for the school in the way they that they behave when they are on school visits or working in the local community.
- The democratically elected school council gives pupils the chance to have a say in bringing about improvements such as in playground equipment. Older pupils are 'buddies' to Reception children, helping them to settle safely into school routines. Pupils elected their own sports council to oversee improvements there, and prefects are always on hand to offer timely advice when high standards of behaviour seem likely to falter.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils feel entirely safe in school. They state strongly that there are no incidents of bullying, including racist or other forms of name-calling. They know how to protect themselves against potential dangers of the Internet. Pupils say the grown-ups in school take excellent care of them.
- Parents fully endorse pupils' views and speak highly of the way that the school cares for all pupils. They appreciate the additional care and safe environment provided for their children who attend the breakfast club.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Expectations regarding standards of work and pupils' behaviour are consistently high and have had a strong impact on pupils' good achievement over time.
- Pupils say that learning is fun because lessons are enjoyable.
- There is good learning across the range of subjects. This is reflected, for example, in some impressive art work displayed in the school and exciting science investigations. Pupils also show great enthusiasm for learning, when talking about their physical education and music. There is well-presented work in their books, including homework.
- Teachers know how pupils learn best and use a variety of methods and resources to bring out the best from pupils. Varying needs are accounted for well, so that challenges are pitched at the right level. This ensures that pupils work confidently and make good progress.
- Technology features well in lessons. Electronic whiteboards keep pupils focused on their learning and there is good access to a range of equipment.
- Teaching assistants are skilful and very sensitive to pupils' particular learning needs. They are a valued part of the teaching team and provide crucial support. A particularly good example of this was the way that a teaching assistant coached a non-English speaking child, new to Reception class, so that he could name all of the facial features on his self-portrait. This raised the child's confidence and gave the child a feeling of achievement.
- There is a good focus on the development of pupils' literacy skills. Pupils learn basic rules of grammar, punctuation and spelling well. There are ample opportunities for pupils to use these skills in their writing for different purposes, such as writing poetry or expressing different points of view. Pupils also draw on knowledge of other subjects such as when they write imaginative stories in a historical setting, or explanations of what they know about number systems.
- Mathematics skills are generally taught well and there are good opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge to problem-solving. Pupils in Year 6, for example, used what they know about prime numbers and prime factors to solve some number puzzles.
- Mathematics teaching in Key Stage 1 moves pupils' learning on at a good pace, but time is spent helping pupils to catch up because they do not have the mathematical knowledge and skills they need when they enter Year 1. Consequently, although they make good progress, they do not all reach the expected standards for their age by the end of Year 2.
- Adults question pupils well about their learning and check progress in lessons, so that they get a good understanding of what they need to do next. Occasionally in lessons, however, pupils' errors are not picked up and rectified immediately.
- Marking is good and pupils say that they find it helpful. Good presentation is modelled by teachers, and pupils are shown the next steps they should take.

**The achievement of pupils is good**

- From mostly below typical starting points pupils achieve well by the time they leave the school.
- They make good progress in Years 1 and 2, especially in reading and writing. There has been a successful drive to improve phonics skills and this has taken the proportion of pupils who reach the expected standard in Year 1 to well above average. The impact of this is the increased confidence pupils have when tackling reading and writing activities.
- There has been an upward trend in the standards reached in both subjects. However, this is not so of mathematics where the school acknowledges that there is still work to be done to get more pupils to where they should be by the end of Year 2.
- There was an unusual dip in the standards reached by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2013. Starting points for this group were mostly well below those usually expected at key Stage 1 A further set-back was temporary changes in teaching during their time in Year 6. Nevertheless, most pupils made the progress expected of them in reading and writing by the end of the year, although mathematics results fell short of expectations.
- Current work in pupils' books as well as school and local authority analysis of assessments show a rapid rise in standards at the end of Year 6 in 2014. Standards are above average showing considerable improvement over most previous years. Work samples from previous years indicate that these above average standards in writing and mathematics are on track to be sustained.
- The school's records show that progress from Year 3 to Year 6 is gathering pace with increasing proportions of pupils making more than the progress expected of them.
- Pupils achieve well in reading. In Year 2 pupils read confidently and used their phonics skills well to read unfamiliar words. They are keen on books and stories and like to talk about the books they read at home.
- Year 6 pupils develop good levels of fluency and understanding when reading. They use expression well and read aloud confidently. They select from a wide range of authors and are on track to achieve well by the end of Year 6.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress from their starting points and achieve well. Their learning is well managed and provided for. Best use is made of external agencies when required, and parents are kept well informed and helped to support their children's learning. The school has introduced a nurture group to boost the skills of the most vulnerable learners to help them achieve their best.
- Most-able pupils are catered for well in lessons by increased levels of challenge. There are also teaching sessions arranged for before and after school. Additional mathematics teaching is provided through the school's links with the high school. This provision and provision within school is increasing the proportions of pupils who make more than the progress expected of them and taking more pupils to the highest possible level in mathematics and writing in line with national averages.
- Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those supported by pupil premium funding also make good progress. Although 2013 national data (an atypical year for the school) show the standards reached by disadvantaged pupils to be lower than pupils nationally and below others in the school, the current picture is very different. In 2014 this group of pupils performed better than others in the school in reading, making about two terms better progress, and did equally as well as others in writing and mathematics. This amply demonstrates the school's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity.

**The early years provision requires improvement**

- School assessments show children's abilities on entering the Nursery class to be well below typical expectations overall for their age, and particularly in the area of communication and language skills. They make steady progress, but are still below expectations when they move into Reception. Assessments for the end of Reception show that too few pupils make good progress to reach expected levels of development and are not as well prepared for their work in Year 1 as they should be.
- Over time, teaching and provision in the Early Years has addressed children's personal, social and emotional needs very well. They are very well behaved and very enthusiastic when they enter Year 1. However, they have not learned the mathematical and literacy skills they need to move their learning on quickly enough. This has had something of a negative impact, especially on mathematics progress and achievement at the end of Key Stage 1, because children have to start making up ground in Year 1.
- In addition there has not been an established leadership giving clear direction to the planning and provision for children's learning in the Early Years.

- These issues have been recognised by school leaders who have worked hard to address them. Provision for pupils' outdoor learning and physical development are now good. There have been new appointments and there is a greater emphasis in planning for, and on meeting children's needs. Valuable information gained from home visits is used well as a starting point for planning the first activities for children in the Nursery class.
- Although purposeful work is now evident in both Nursery and Reception, it is too early to judge the outcomes for the children currently in Reception.
- The school recognises that improvement is required and that robust checking of children's progress in all that they do is essential to ensuring their readiness for Year 1.

## 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

|                                |        |
|--------------------------------|--------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 108030 |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Leeds  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 443959 |

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

|  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary                 |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Voluntary aided         |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 3–11                    |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                   |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 210                     |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body      |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | K Walpole               |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Stephanie Flaherty      |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 26 September 2007       |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 0113 232 9031           |
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