

St John and Monica Catholic Primary School

Chantry Road, Moseley, Birmingham, B13 8DW

Inspection dates 15–16 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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.

- All pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make excellent progress, no matter what their starting points. Standards are well above those of most schools nationally by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is outstanding. Teachers have high expectations for what pupils can achieve and make lessons interesting and enjoyable.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly with encouraging comments, but do not always give enough guidance on how to raise it to the next level.
- Pupils feel very safe and show a huge amount of respect and care for each other. They conduct themselves exceptionally well in lessons, at playtimes and around the school.
- Excellent promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural skills and awareness makes a substantial contribution to their exceptional personal development.
- Leadership at all levels is outstanding. Leaders have very good systems for checking on pupils' attainment and progress. As a result, pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching continue to improve.
- Governors know the school very well. They hold leaders rigorously to account and ensure that all aspects of the school meet the highest standards.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons, of which two were seen together with the headteacher and one with the deputy headteacher.
In addition, inspectors listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, a representative of the local authority, the Chair of the Governing Body and school leaders.
- Inspectors looked at many documents including: the school’s own information on pupils’ current and recent progress; planning of work in different subjects; leaders’ monitoring of teaching and learning quality; and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding of pupils.

Inspection team

Steve Nelson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Tracey Kneale

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action, and at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, are above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding to assist certain groups, which in this school applies to pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those in the care of the local authority) is well above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum standards expected nationally for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that all marking gives pupils clear guidance on what they need to do to improve the quality of their work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- The majority of children start Reception with levels of skill and knowledge below those expected for their age. As a result of outstanding teaching and creative activities, with an excellent level of challenge, the children make very good progress. They enter Year 1 as confident learners.
- By the end of Year 6, most pupils have reached standards well above the national average for English and mathematics. The schools' accurate progress data show that pupils are on track to achieve high standards again at the end of this year.
- The results of the most recent Year 1 phonics (linking letters with sounds) screening check show that pupils make a very good start in understanding the sounds letters make. Pupils are confident readers because the strong focus on reading is sustained throughout the school.
- Standards in mathematics and writing are high. Every chance is taken to make sure that pupils can, for example, count and calculate accurately. Pupils are highly skilled in solving problems. Writing is often imaginative and exciting to read. Work is neat and spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate.
- Pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium achieve very well because the school uses the extra funding highly effectively. In 2012, they made exceptional progress and attained well above other eligible pupils nationally. The Year 6 funded pupils were three and five months behind their classmates in English and mathematics in 2012 tests, but this still reflected outstanding progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make excellent progress. This is because of the very well-focused support and highly effective teaching by teachers and other adults, who make sure that pupils' work is set at just the right level to be challenging but achievable.
- Pupils from a wide variety of backgrounds learn exceptionally well. Those who speak English as an additional language receive highly effective support that enables them quickly to catch up with others and in many cases exceed their standards.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching in the school is outstanding over time and as a result pupils make rapid gains in their learning. Teachers and support staff have very high expectations and a secure understanding of the subjects and topics that they teach.
- Teachers use a variety of creative ways to engage, motivate and interest pupils. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils made excellent progress while working at a brisk pace researching rectangles, and finding answers to 'true' or false questions on how many rectangles can be made using 12 squares.
- The way subjects are taught is planned particularly well to make sure pupils build up their key reading, writing and mathematics skills systematically, both in dedicated lessons and through links across different subjects. Teachers take great care to meet the differing needs of the pupils in their class and always ensure work is not too easy or too difficult. Homework strongly

supports pupils' learning.

- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and provide encouragement where it is due. However, they do not consistently give pupils enough guidance on what to do next and how to improve their work. Pupils assess their own work and the progress they are making towards achieving their targets.
- The pupils themselves make an exceptional contribution to their own learning. They are eager to learn, highly attentive, and think deeply about the ideas they are being taught. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils discussed how to write sentences using the spellings for the week and checked each other's spellings.
- Children in Reception benefit from a very good balance of activities between those led by adults and those that they themselves choose. They are given lots of opportunities for speaking and listening, and hands-on learning play areas, and this means children make excellent progress in all areas of their learning.
- Teachers give pupils very good opportunities to work individually and in groups on a variety of tasks and activities. Working with partners helps pupils to challenge one another and share their ideas, such as how to use language effectively or which calculation method would be the best to use in a mathematical task.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They treat each other and their teachers with respect, listen attentively and perform well in different situations, such as when working in pairs and small groups. This behaviour has a positive impact on the quality of learning and enables them to get the most out of lessons.
- Relationships between pupils are very positive throughout the school. Pupils get on very well with each other and are extremely polite and friendly to staff and visitors.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. It is exemplary throughout the school. The school's records of behaviour show that any type of behavioural incident is rare. Pupils have a very good knowledge of how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, such as road safety and using the internet.
- Pupils are very considerate towards one another. They said that pupils are rarely unkind to one another and there is no actual bullying such as verbal or cyber-bullying. Pupils trust staff and are confident that they will listen to their problems and act on their concerns.
- Attendance has improved and is now above average because senior leaders have worked effectively to promote regular attendance.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Outstanding leadership and management are demonstrated through the ambitious drive and determination of the headteacher and senior leaders. As a result, pupils make outstanding progress and attainment has been consistently well above the national average.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher make very good use of information from the checks

on teaching and learning to develop teachers' skills and improve teaching. Targets set for teachers are closely linked to pupils' achievement and show that their skills have improved. Teachers' pay levels are determined by how successful they are in helping pupils to achieve well.

- Leaders check pupils' progress and attainment very thoroughly. They use the resulting information to identify any trends in performance so they can ensure that all individuals and groups of pupils make as much progress as possible, and have an equal opportunity to succeed.
- Leaders, governors and managers have a clear understanding of how well the school is doing and where further improvements are needed. This has enabled them to make effective plans for further development.
- The excellent range of subjects the school provides is enhanced by a wide range of activities beyond the school day. Extremely well planned out-of-school activities, such as the residential trips and visits to museums and theatres, make sure that what the school offers for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils have very good opportunities to practise and extend their reading, writing, mathematical and computing skills in a wide range of subjects.
- The local authority gives measured support as necessary. It has worked well with the school to improve the quality of teaching and learning, and has contributed effectively to its improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are a committed team. They share the strong ambition and sense of direction evident throughout the school. Governors know how well the school performs in relation to similar schools and challenge the school leaders to ensure further improvement. They carefully monitor the school's finances, including the extra pupil premium funding, and understand how it is helping pupils achieve better. Governors have an accurate knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They assess their own training needs to get the best balance of skills to serve the school. Governors make sure that leaders take action in the event that any teaching is weak, and make sure that any pay increases are directly linked to pupils' performance. Governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet current national requirements.

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	103478
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	411806

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	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maire O'Halloran
Headteacher	Eileen Walker
Date of previous school inspection	23 September 2008
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