

# St Alban's Catholic Primary School, Chaddesden, Derby

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	112927
<b>Local authority</b>	Derby
<b>Inspection number</b>	378607
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 February 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Joanne Harvey HMI

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

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<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>	322
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Clare Cuomo
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mark Booton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 February 2011
<b>School address</b>	Newstead Avenue Chaddesden Derby DE21 6NU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01332 673823
<b>Fax number</b>	01332 671498
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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	28–29 February 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	378607



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Joanne Harvey

Her Majesty's Inspector

Mark Siswick

Additional inspector

Gillian Broughton

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 14 teachers teaching 24 lessons, five of these were observed jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made short visits to sessions in which pupils learned reading skills and support groups for helping pupils catch up. Inspectors scrutinised samples of pupils' work books in class. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, parents and carers, governors, staff, leaders and managers at all levels and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at the school development plan, assessment information, the school and local authority monitoring information, lesson plans and school policies. The inspectors analysed 86 questionnaires from parents and carers together with questionnaires from staff and a representative sample of pupils.

## Information about the school

This is a larger than average-sized school of its type. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. A small number of pupils speak English as an additional language, their main language often being Polish. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is similar to that found in most schools. Since the last inspection four teachers have left. Two permanent class teachers and three temporary teachers have been appointed. The school was previously inspected in February 2011 and judged to require a notice to improve. It received a monitoring visit in November 2011 when it was judged to have made satisfactory progress. The school meets the current floor standard set by the government, which determines the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school hosts breakfast and after-school care which is managed by a private provider and therefore subject to a separate inspection.

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key findings

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

- This is a satisfactory school. It has successfully addressed the weaknesses raised at its last inspection. More robust systems to monitor provision and outcomes have resulted in improvements in teaching and learning and pupils' achievement.
- Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils' progress has quickened and is at least satisfactory. For some year groups it is good. Some groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs or those known to be eligible for free school meals, progress as well as their peers nationally but they rarely progress as well as other groups in school. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress. Improved progress means that standards are rising.
- Teaching is satisfactory. Inadequate teaching has been eradicated. Some good and outstanding teaching was seen during the inspection, helping to close the gap where there has been a legacy of underachievement. There is still not enough good practice to secure consistently good progress for all. Teachers take care to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils. However, there are not enough opportunities to secure the development of strong speaking and listening skills.
- Pupils develop many good personal skills. Their behaviour contributes well to a harmonious and welcoming environment. It does not make a strong contribution to good learning in lessons because pupils have not been taught the skills needed to learn independently. Attendance has been average over recent years but for some groups it is below.
- Senior leaders have strengthened monitoring and evaluation and empowered subject and phase leaders to contribute. As a result, teaching and progress have improved. Improvements have not been as swift in the Early Years Foundation Stage and for pupils who receive additional support because leadership is not as well developed in these areas.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactorily may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Raise attainment to be consistently above average in English and mathematics and quicken pupils' progress to be consistently at least good by:
  - ensuring the most effective elements of teaching seen are consistently applied across the school
  - bringing more rigour to the monitoring and evaluation of provision for pupils who receive additional support, are known to be eligible for free school meals and for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage
  - provide opportunities throughout the school which will swiftly develop pupils speaking and listening skills and the skills they need to be able to drive their own learning independently
  - improving the attendance of persistent absentees so that their progress matches that of pupils who attend more regularly.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Parents and carers who returned the inspection questionnaire are happy that the school meets their children's needs, develops their basic skills and ensures their achievement is good. This is true in some, but not all cases.

Inspection evidence confirms that achievement has improved significantly since the last inspection. Standards have steadily risen for the last three years at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils attained above average levels in English and mathematics by the time they left the school for the first time last year. An increasing number of year groups currently in school are on track for at least average and some for above average attainment, particularly in reading, increasingly so in mathematics but writing is relatively weaker. Improvement has been slower in the Early Years Foundation Stage where children continue to enter and leave with knowledge, skills and understanding similar to those expected for their age. Pupils who receive additional support or who are entitled to claim free school meals are less often represented amongst those who make better than satisfactory progress. Speaking and listening and independent learning skills remain a relative weakness.

At the time of the last inspection, pupils made much of their progress at the end of Key Stage 2 where teaching was strongest. This is still the case but as the quality of teaching has improved elsewhere in school, variation in progress has become less apparent. Underachievement in Key Stage 1, identified at the time of the last inspection, has been tackled successfully and progress now quickens here, particularly in Year 2. Accelerated progress in reading is due to the systematic teaching of the sounds that letters make which has been extended through Key Stage 2 along with the effective teaching of higher order reading skills in guided

reading groups. As a consequence, pupils' reading skills across the school are better than those nationally expected. Pupils love to read and take delight in discussing their favourite books, though older pupils say they would like a greater choice of more challenging books.

Progress in mathematics is quickening, for example, where teachers are offering pupils more practical opportunities to use their basic mathematic skills to solve problems for themselves. This practice is not consistent across the school. Pupils have more opportunities to write at length in a greater range of contexts. Consequently, evidence confirms that the progress pupils make in writing is quickening but there is still catching up to do.

### **Quality of teaching**

Teaching is satisfactory and results in most pupils making satisfactory progress. The inspectors agree with the response of parents and carers in that it has some good features. It is satisfactory in the Early Years Foundation Stage where adults are still developing their understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and of how young children learn.

Teachers work effectively to promote positive relationships and behaviour so that lessons are calm and pupils sustain concentration even when tasks are not sufficiently challenging. The new curriculum planning format makes expectations and attainment levels clear for different levels of ability. Lesson objectives ensure pupils know what to do to be successful. Teachers' ability to assess accurately has improved, and they more often use this information to plan lessons matched to ability. This is not always the case as occasionally, pupils of different abilities carry out similar tasks. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, opportunities are missed to plan meaningful independent learning activities with adults on hand to move learning on successfully.

In one of the best lessons seen, Year 6 pupils made rapid progress in their understanding of probability. This was because the teacher built the lesson on prior learning and used a range of teaching strategies and relevant examples to engage and enthuse pupils. They talked confidently to their partners to test out and develop their ideas and then put their learning into practice through well chosen activities with different levels of difficulty. All the time, adults checked everyone's understanding, asked questions to challenge thinking and made pupils explain their ideas so that their learning moved on at a rapid pace. In another less successful lesson, pupils made slower progress in developing their understanding of the features of information texts because, whilst one group worked productively with the class teacher, other groups were given tasks which occupied them but which were not sufficiently meaningful or challenging. Too much time passed without an adult checking whether there were misunderstandings to be addressed or tasks modified.

In some year groups, teachers ensure pupils know their targets, which they say help them improve their work. Some good examples of marking were seen, with comments to help pupils improve and time given to address mistakes. Occasionally, pupils are encouraged to assess their own understanding, with the teacher swiftly responding to pupils' assessments. These practices are not yet fully embedded

across the school.

A strength of teaching is its good promotion of pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This underpins the school's work and is woven through all lessons so, for example, pupils are able to work harmoniously and supportively together and are able to reflect and discuss issues maturely. Homework supports learning well in some classes and allows parents and carers to understand and support their children's work. Some parents and carers expressed the view, shared by inspectors that expectations about homework and communication varied between classes.

In the best lessons, additional adults and other resources are used well to maximise learning. Occasionally, teaching assistants are too focused on supervising the completion of tasks rather than promoting learning, or, they encourage the pupils to become too dependent on them rather than ensuring they develop the skills and confidence to tackle problems for themselves. The school works hard to ensure the most vulnerable are cared for and included but doesn't evaluate the success of this work carefully enough.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils respond well to the consistent and effective behaviour management strategies. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school contributes to the harmonious and positive atmosphere. Pupils recognise their role in keeping it so. They work together supportively in lessons and volunteer to carry out jobs around school and be members of the school council. They are courteous and helpful. School records show that unacceptable behaviour, including racism and bullying is extremely rare. Pupils report that issues are dealt with swiftly and appropriately so they feel safe and happy to come to school. They say their views are listened to and there is someone to go to if they have any worries or concerns. Even though pupils have positive attitudes to learning, behaviour is judged satisfactory because they have not developed the best learning behaviour so are sometimes passive and dependent rather than actively engaged in their own learning.

Curriculum programmes ensure that pupils are confident about ways to help keep themselves safe, such as from the dangers of roads, fire and the internet. Pupils say they are happy to come to school and many demonstrate this through their punctuality and average levels of attendance. There remain a few, for whom poor attendance is impacting negatively on their achievement.

### **Leadership and management**

Senior leaders, the staff team and the governing body have long focussed successfully on creating a caring community where everyone is included, feel safe and have equality of opportunity to succeed. They have now successfully widened their focus with a similar rigour to bringing improvements to achievement and teaching and learning. Systems for monitoring and evaluation are now rigorous and involve curriculum as well as senior leaders. For example, the effective leadership of English has ensured reading has become a strength. Writing and mathematics are improving; all demonstrating the satisfactory capacity to continue to improve but

some recent initiatives have yet to demonstrate sustained impact. Systems for tracking pupil performance have improved but are only beginning to give leaders an accurate picture of attainment and progress. Leaders recognise that there is more to be done to ensure they are fully effective in monitoring performance in the Early Years Foundation Stage and for pupils who receive additional support. Staff are supported and held accountable through performance management and regular pupil performance discussions. Several volunteered that they now feel 'empowered' to make a real difference to outcomes for children.

The governing body are highly supportive and committed to the school. They are receiving better quality information which is helping them to hold leaders to account for the school's performance. They ensure that statutory requirements for safeguarding and child protection are well met.

The successful promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is woven through the curriculum and throughout all aspects of school life. The curriculum is enriched through, for example, educational visits and opportunities to experience the creative arts. Consequently, pupils are able to reflect on and discuss current issues and those that concern them. They are well prepared for life in a multicultural, multi-faith society.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral	15	50	29	5



units				
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



1 March 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of St Alban's Catholic Primary School, Derby, DE21 6NU**

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to inspect your school recently. I am writing to tell you what we found out about your school.

We think St Alban's Catholic Primary School is a satisfactory school. It has some good features. Your teachers work hard to plan interesting activities for you to do in most subjects. As a result, you make at least satisfactory progress. You do particularly well in your reading and your progress in mathematics and writing is improving. When you leave your attainment is often similar to that of pupils in most schools but most recently it has been even better. The youngest children settle into the Early Years Foundation Stage and make satisfactory progress.

You told us that your school is a happy place. You also said that teachers look after you well so that there is always someone there for you if you have worries or concerns. We were impressed with how well you get on with each other. We noticed how well you concentrate on your work, even when the lessons are not as interesting or challenging as some others. Your attendance is similar to that found in most school. However, there are some of you who do not come to school often enough and because of this, do not make as much progress in their learning as they could if they came every day.

The staff and governing body want the best for you and are keen for your school to be even better. That is why we have asked them to check more carefully to make sure that all teaching is as good as the best we saw. We want them to give you lots of opportunities to make sure your speaking and listening skills develop better and that you know how to make the very best of all the learning opportunities you are given. We have asked them to make sure they check very carefully how well all of you are progressing. You can play your part by continuing to work hard and by coming to school every day.

Yours sincerely

Joanne Harvey  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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