

St Alban's Catholic Primary School, Chaddesden

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112927
Local Authority	Derby
Inspection number	357224
Inspection dates	8–9 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Sue Hall

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	332
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Clare Cuomo
Headteacher	Mark Booton
Date of previous school inspection	12 February 2008
School address	Newstead Avenue Chaddesden, Derby DE21 6NU
Telephone number	01332 673823
Fax number	01332 671498
Email address	admin@stalbans.derby.sch.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	8–9 February 2011
Inspection number	357224

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, who observed 12 teachers in a total of 24 lessons or parts of lessons. The headteacher joined inspectors for several lesson observations. Meetings were held with the school's leaders, members of the governing body and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of policies, planning, records, minutes of governing body meetings and data about pupils' performance. They examined documentation associated with the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe. Inspectors scrutinised 86 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, 140 by pupils and 27 by staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key questions.

- How well do all pupils achieve in all subjects, and more particularly the girls and pupils with higher attainment in mathematics?
- Does pupils' behaviour have a positive impact on their learning?
- How effectively do staff use the full range of assessment information to ensure that lesson activities are interesting and challenge all groups of pupils?
- How effective and rigorous are senior staff in monitoring the work of the school, judging the quality of provision and identifying further areas for improvement?

Information about the school

The school, situated in an outer suburb of the City of Derby, is larger than the average-size primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. A small number of pupils come from families where English is spoken as an additional language, their main language often being Polish. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. Their additional needs are mainly specific learning difficulties and emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school hosts breakfast and after-school care which is run by a private provider and is inspected separately. The school holds an Artsmark award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the progress made by pupils and the effectiveness with which leaders and managers ensure that teachers accurately use data from assessment.

Parents and carers note the many pastoral strengths of St Alban's and the thoughts of one echo those of several in saying 'our children are well cared for' and 'staff are very approachable'. Most pupils say they like school and think staff help them to be safe and healthy. The personal development and well-being of the pupils are satisfactory as are the care, guidance and support provided for them.

Children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and when they enter Year 1 their attainment is typical of children of this age. At the end of Year 6, attainment is broadly average and has recently improved. However, this summary masks a picture of uneven and inconsistent progress in some classes, which has been the situation for some while. Progress and achievement are therefore inadequate overall; the progress of the potentially higher-attaining pupils is particularly weak. Data indicate that less progress has often been made in mathematics than in English but lesson observations and samples of pupils' work show that, where there are weaknesses, these are across the range of subjects.

Much of the teaching provided by staff that are quite new to the school is of good quality because these lessons are well planned to take account of the range of pupils' ability. However, the quality of teaching and learning, while satisfactory overall, ranges from some that is outstanding to a greater proportion that is inadequate. In too many lessons, the use of assessment information to inform planning is unsatisfactory. Tasks are not well matched to pupils' abilities and therefore many do not make the progress that they are capable of. The curriculum is satisfactory and promotes the development of a range of basic skills.

The school has begun to recognise that the concentration on pastoral matters has meant that there has not been a tight enough focus on achievement. Senior staff have allowed too much weak teaching to continue for too long and the leadership and management of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. This is because monitoring has not given rise to rigorous evaluation of the school's work. However, with the appointment of an outstanding practitioner as deputy headteacher, the school is developing a better understanding of what needs to be improved. The leadership of mathematics is very effective and that of the Early Years Foundation Stage is increasingly so. There have been several improvements in the way the school works over the last year, although some of

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

these, including checks on planning, are at a relatively early stage and not embedded across the school. These changes, together with the governing body challenging the senior leaders more, are now ensuring that the school has the capacity to make further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and pupils' achievement across the school by:
 - ensuring that all pupils and particularly the more able make consistently good progress in all subjects.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that staff make full use of the range of assessment information to plan and provide activities that fully challenge all groups of pupils.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that senior leaders take immediate action to address any weaknesses in teaching and learning
 - making sure that senior staff check the quality of planning on a more regular basis
 - ensuring that the monitoring of the effectiveness of teaching and learning is rigorously evaluative
 - making sure all staff with specific responsibilities have the opportunity to develop their role in monitoring provision.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge that are in line with expectations for their age. When pupils enter Year 1 their attainment is in line with the targets for children of this age, although writing and calculation skills are a little below other areas. As they move through the school pupils make inconsistent progress because of the variable quality of teaching, which impacts on their learning. At the end of Key Stage 1, attainment is average, but few pupils achieve at the higher levels in their work which is unsatisfactory given the range of abilities in each cohort. At the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is also average. School data indicate that in 2010 there was considerable improvement from the previous four years, when attainment had been slightly below national averages. In lessons observed during the inspection, Year 6 pupils made the best progress. They made excellent gains in their learning when finding out more about probability and the likelihood of events, including animated discussions about which words indicate more or less likelihood of something happening. However, strong progress in Year 6 is not enough to make up for the gaps in pupils' learning and more-able pupils across the school do not achieve all they could. There is no significant overall difference in the achievement of boys and girls although in some activities girls are much less responsive than boys. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those from different backgrounds make similar progress to their classmates.

Most pupils say they feel secure in school and have a good understanding of how to keep safe including consideration for others and knowing how to keep safe out of school. Pupils'

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

behaviour for learning is satisfactory. Where teaching is good, many are enthusiastic, although in some activities several pupils make little effort to join in discussions and are quite passive in their learning. While some parents and carers believe that there is bullying in school, pupils say there is very little and are confident that any concerns are taken seriously. Pupils understand how to lead a healthy lifestyle and there are lots of opportunities for active play. All enjoy healthy fruit snacks. Pupils volunteer willingly to take on roles of responsibility and the school council plays an active part in contributing to decisions about school life, but there is not an extensive range of roles for pupils to undertake. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is satisfactory with social development being promoted well through activities such as 'talking partners'. This makes a satisfactory contribution to helping pupils prepare for their future. Spiritual development centres around the faith life of the school.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is too variable and, while it was good or better in almost half the lessons observed during the inspection, there was more inadequate teaching than outstanding. This variability is also reflected in samples of pupils' recent work. Where teaching is at least good, planning matches the ability range within the class and there are scheduled opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas, which extend their learning. Teaching is best in Year 6 because of the high level of challenge in activities and the use

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

of searching questions which make demands on pupils. The marking of pupils' work is often thorough and makes clear what needs to be improved. Where teaching is satisfactory or weaker, there is little evidence of teachers' planning to meet the needs of the full ability range within the class and there is not enough challenge for the most-able pupils. The use of assessment information is inadequate because in too many classes not enough account is taken of pupils' prior learning. The curriculum is satisfactory. Cross-curricular provision for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology is satisfactory although this is not 'mapped' carefully into topic work, so the development of each skill is inconsistent.

The pastoral care of the pupils has been a long-standing strength of the school but academic guidance is less effective. The learning environment in classes is welcoming and staff often develop good relationships that help build pupils' self-confidence. There are good transition arrangements between the groups in the Early Years Foundation Stage, although arrangements with other schools are not as effective. Child protection procedures are sound and the headteacher attends all case conferences. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is satisfactory, although the leadership role of this important area of work is not sufficiently prominent in the school. Nevertheless, staff in support roles are often very effective, particularly in assisting pupils with complex needs. The learning mentor is effective in supporting pupils whose circumstances have made them particularly vulnerable, including those with emotional and behavioural difficulties, but has only limited involvement in helping support their regular attendance. Staff at midday often prioritise the clearing of equipment and miss the opportunity to interact with pupils and help them develop good table manners and calm behaviour in the dining area.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The long-serving headteacher takes a lead in pastoral matters and is well regarded within the parish and local faith community. The recently appointed deputy headteacher has made a strong contribution to developing greater vision and drive for improvement in the staff team. This is not only through providing outstanding teaching but also working with colleagues and as subject leader for mathematics. This is starting to develop a much better understanding of the use of tracking information to identify where pupils are falling behind. The shared responsibility for literacy is a worthy attempt to harness the skills of several staff but this role lacks clarity. Governance is satisfactory with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body being well informed of different aspects of provision. Governors are beginning to make better use of data in order to hold the school to account

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

for the existing weaknesses. A key weakness has been the lack of rigorous enough systems to monitor the quality of provision. The issues identified have not been tackled with sufficient resolve to eradicate them.

The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers is satisfactory, as are partnerships with other organisations. There are links with external agencies that support potentially vulnerable pupils well but the school sometimes misses the opportunities for staff to visit more successful schools to learn what can be improved. The school tackles discrimination and promotes equality of opportunity in a satisfactory manner, although sometimes the needs of the higher-attaining pupils are not prioritised as well as they might be. Safeguarding procedures are satisfactory. There are careful checks on those who work with the pupils and the school conducts appropriate risk assessments of the site. The school promotes community cohesion in a satisfactory manner through work with local groups and emerging links with others in the wider and global community.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make satisfactory progress in the Nursery and Reception classes. In some areas, including their personal, social, emotional and creative development, progress is good. Most children are happy and talkative individuals, who settle well, are keen to join in, and become motivated and inquisitive learners. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with a growing proportion that is good because, with new assessment procedures, staff have a more accurate understanding of which skills children need to improve. This, together with regular observation and assessment, feeds into individual 'Learning Journey' records and provides a better match of work to children's abilities. The learning environment is spacious, attractive and well resourced, although not enough use is made of the outside areas when children can move freely between indoor and outdoor activities.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Planning is detailed with a well-considered balance of child-chosen and adult-led activities. Role-play activities are an established part of provision but staff do not always develop the activities as well as they might to encourage speaking or early mark-making skills further. The recently appointed Early Years Foundation Stage leader is developing her role well and providing a new sense of purpose for the staff team and a greater focus on children's progress.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The majority of responses by parents and carers to the questionnaire were positive although there was some disagreement about each aspect of the school's provision. The strongest agreement is that parents and carers are confident that staff keep the children safe and help them develop healthy lifestyles. Several comments praise the pastoral strengths of the school with one respondent remarking that their child 'is very happy to come to school in the morning which is great'. Another notes, 'I see a difference in his ability and confidence and this is all due to the staff.' The main area of concern noted is that several respondents do not think the school deals with unacceptable behaviour well enough. During the inspection, inspectors judged behaviour overall as satisfactory and noted that very few pupils reported that there is any bullying. Some parents and carers also think that their children are not making enough progress and the school is not helping parents and carers to support their children's learning. Inspectors agree that some pupils do not make enough progress and think that, while the information to parents and carers is satisfactory, the school could do a little more to inform and involve parents and carers about progress and how to support learning.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Alban's Catholic Primary School, Chaddesden to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 86 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 332 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	62	72	21	24	1	1	2	2
The school keeps my child safe	57	66	28	33	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	39	45	43	50	4	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	33	38	45	52	7	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	38	44	42	49	3	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	47	55	30	35	7	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	40	47	42	49	3	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	32	37	45	52	4	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	42	49	39	45	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	35	41	48	10	12	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	41	42	49	4	5	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	47	55	35	41	3	3	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	52	60	28	33	4	5	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



10 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Alban's Catholic Primary School, Chaddesden, DE21 6NU

Thank you very much for making the inspectors welcome when we visited your school recently. My colleagues and I enjoyed meeting you, especially the groups we talked to who helped explain what you all do. We also liked meeting you in lessons and break-times and when we attended assembly. I enjoyed chatting to several of you at lunchtime and particularly seeing how much those of you in Year 6 are progressing with your work. Thank you for filling in the questionnaires.

Currently, your school has a few important weaknesses that mean that some of you are not making the progress that you could. Therefore, I have issued something called a 'notice to improve', which means that things need to get better. Inspectors will return to check on the progress the school is making.

The headteacher, governing body and staff have agreed to work on some main areas to improve the school. These include to:

- help you all make more progress in your work so that you can reach higher levels in everything you do
- make sure that staff use the information they get when they check your work to set tasks that are just a little bit harder for most of you
- ensure that the school's leaders check even more carefully what is provided for you and identify what can be improved.

You can also all help by making sure you always join in discussions and produce your very best work.

Yours sincerely

Sue Hall

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.