

Saint Benedict's Roman Catholic VA Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134706
Local Authority	Redcar and Cleveland
Inspection number	341507
Inspection dates	30 November 2010–1 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Kate Pringle

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	425
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs June Craven
Headteacher	Miss C Garvey
Date of previous school inspection	12 September 2006
School address	Mersey Road Redcar North Yorkshire TS10 1LS
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by five additional inspectors. Twenty lessons and 16 teachers were observed. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at pupils' books, assessment information, policies and procedures, school development plans and updates of pupils' progress. Views of stakeholders were also considered through questionnaire responses from 100 parents and carers, 18 staff and 98 pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. Inspectors looked in detail at the following.

- How effectively the use of observation and assessment influences provision and outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- How effectively teaching and learning challenge the differing needs of pupils in order to secure progress for all groups of pupils.
- How well the curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to become independent learners and makes the best use of their basic skills, including information and communication technology (ICT), to support learning across other subjects.
- How successful the school has been in addressing areas for action in order to improve provision and outcomes for pupils.

Information about the school

This is a larger-than-average Catholic primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language is low. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is low and few have a statement of special educational needs.

Awards achieved by the school in the last three years include Basic Skills, Healthy School status, Eco Schools Bronze, Activemark, Investors in People and the Financial Management Standards in Schools (FMSiS).

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. It has many outstanding features which contribute significantly to the establishment of warm and caring relationships. The vast majority of parents and carers support all aspects of school life and they recognise the deep commitment of staff to provide a happy and secure environment in which their children can learn and develop. One parent said, 'This school fosters a spirit of community with the children and this supports their emotional development and social well-being.' Pupils say that they enjoy school and feel valued, which is reflected in their good attendance. Their understanding of how to keep fit and well is exceptional as they act as ambassadors to others in actively promoting healthy lifestyles. Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils demonstrate respect and speak of the need for tolerance towards others.

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage where they make good progress from levels below those expected for their age. Pupils progress well overall through the school to leave Year 6 with levels of attainment that are above those expected for their age. However, progress is variable; it slows in Key Stage 1 before accelerating again in Key Stage 2. Where progress is slower, teachers' use of assessment information to plan activities for pupils' individual abilities is less effective. Similarly, marking does not focus well enough upon pupils' success in meeting their targets or inform pupils sufficiently about their next steps to improve further. Although most groups of pupils make good progress, those who are more able are insufficiently challenged at Key Stage 1 to attain the higher levels. All pupils display good attitudes to learning because of highly positive relationships with teachers and other staff. Exceptional care, guidance and support and highly successful links with parents and carers, and with other partners, ensure that the needs of those pupils whose circumstances have made them vulnerable or those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are met fully; they make equally good progress in line with other pupils in the school. Overall outcomes are good and the school provides good value for money.

The headteacher motivates staff successfully and shares aspirations with all staff and managers. Self-evaluation is accurate and leaders successfully drive improvement of areas for action through focused support and monitoring, using highly effective links with other partners. For example, the creative curriculum engages pupils at higher levels, providing increasingly exciting opportunities to explore learning. Increased delegation of leadership has led to a greater understanding of individual responsibilities. Good quality tracking of pupils' performance is now well established and increasingly challenging targets show an improving picture of attainment for Year 6. The school has a good capacity to sustain improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the pace of pupil progress and raise attainment at Key Stage 1 from average to above average by:
 - - making the best use of assessment data to plan challenging activities to meet the needs of individual pupils, particularly those of higher ability
 - - ensuring that marking clearly indicates pupils' successes and what they need to do to improve further.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils are highly supportive of their school and take advantage of the many opportunities it offers. Their positive attitudes and excellent behaviour ensure their effective engagement in tasks set by teachers. In lessons where they are involved practically and creatively in investigation and problem solving at appropriate levels, they participate particularly well and progress is good. However, where tasks are less

well matched to individual abilities progress can slow. Pupils achieve in line with expectations at Key Stage 1, although the proportion of pupils achieving at higher levels is lower than might be expected. This is because the more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged. The overall improving trend at Year 6 has been maintained and attainment is above average. The accelerated progress pupils make in the upper years of Key Stage 2 contributes greatly to the data for the overall progress made. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who are vulnerable, make good progress overall in line with others of their age.

Pupils love their school and speak very positively about harmonious relationships. They recognise the problems individual pupils may have and speak of understanding and respect of difference. In this they demonstrate their good commitment to the school community. They are extremely polite and recognise their responsibilities through the school council; buddies speak of their position as role models for others. Good understanding of safety is supported by a range of activities which helps pupils develop their independent responsibility through, for example, e-safety. Pupils gain an exceptional understanding of how to keep healthy through a wide range of activities addressing their physical and emotional needs. A high proportion of pupils make healthy choices at lunchtime and take advantage of a wide range of physical activities after school, acting as ambassadors to persuade their friends to join them. Attendance has been above average for some years and this, together with their above average attainment and high levels of independence and collaboration, means that they demonstrate good skills for future learning opportunities.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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?

Pupils are eager to please their teachers and are motivated to engage well in their tasks. Increasingly creative approaches to the curriculum are providing greater opportunities for pupils to practise their skills in reading, writing, mathematics and ICT through practical activities. This is leading to greater understanding by pupils of how basic skills support wider learning. Pupils enjoy such challenges, which have a positive impact on their attitudes to learning. Teachers provide time for pupils to reflect, consider, investigate and practise tasks. Although teachers make rigorous and accurate assessment of pupils' learning, not all use this information effectively on a daily basis to set tasks accurately matched to individual abilities. This means that in satisfactory lessons, particularly in Key Stage 1, the pace of learning and pupils' motivation to learn is reduced which hinders some pupils' progress, in particular those of higher ability. Similarly, the quality of marking is inconsistent and does not always fully inform pupils of their success against set targets or what they need to do next in order to achieve higher levels.

The skills-based curriculum provides pupils with interesting and varied opportunities to build understanding across subjects. Enhanced provision through visits and visitors provides pupils with first-hand experiences which excite their imagination. One pupil said, 'They make learning much more fun!' A real strength of the curriculum is personal, social and health education which supports pupils' personal and emotional development. A wider

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range of good quality enrichment activities provide additional opportunities for pupils to extend their skills through sporting and creative pursuits.

The highly inclusive nature of this school with its sensitive approach ensures that any concerns are quickly highlighted and addressed. The highly effective personalised programmes for vulnerable pupils and their families is extremely well supported by staff who work very closely with a wide range of external agencies. Monitoring and evaluation of procedures is exemplary. All pupils access the whole curriculum because every child in the school is recognised as an individual. Comments from pupils indicate that they know this and recognise the strong support given when they have problems or concerns. Excellent communication with parents and carers ensures that information is shared regularly and parents and carers are involved in their children's learning. Transition arrangements to secondary school are outstanding, with key personnel playing a significant part in ensuring the confident move of older pupils to their next stage of education. Systems to ensure high quality behaviour and to maintain above average attendance are extremely rigorous and ensure the positive responses of parents and carers.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

A strong sense of purpose and vision is shared by all leaders and managers and this ensures a highly motivated team. Leaders plan developments within a clearly defined framework for improvement linked to pupils' outcomes. As a result, target setting for the end of Key Stage 2 is challenging and there is clear evidence to demonstrate an improving picture of attainment. Overall, the school demonstrates the effectiveness of its commitment to equal opportunities for pupils through its good impact on pupils' personal development and the overall good progress made by all pupils. Professional development is strongly linked to the needs of the school. Monitoring and evaluation by delegated leaders demonstrates successful impact upon identified areas of development. The school has an accurate assessment of the quality of teaching and learning. Key to the success of this school is the ability of everyone to work together to make this an inclusive school.

After a period of change, the governing body is in a good position to challenge the school because of the commitment it has made to delegate responsibilities, making best use of governors' expertise. Their growing knowledge and understanding of different facets of learning now places them in a good position to challenge and question the school. The commitment to community cohesion is strongly rooted in the Christian principles of the school with many effective supportive links with a range of organisations to help and

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support those less fortunate. The school is presently furthering opportunities to extend present provision to provide more sustainable links with those from other cultures and backgrounds nationally. Safeguarding arrangements are good. Systems go beyond the required levels and strategies are clearly focused upon ensuring that this school provides a healthy and safe environment with regular checks to minimise risks.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Most children enter Nursery with skills below those expected for their age. Skills in emotional and social development, linking sounds and letters, and physical development are particularly weak. Children make good progress and, by the time they enter Year 1, most work within the goals expected for their age with a minority working above this. Staff are caring and look after children very well. Children, including those identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities, settle quickly and confidently. Good relationships contribute greatly to this warm and secure setting in which children learn to share and take turns. Because of this children play and learn happily together. Clear action to improve provision for children has created a setting in which independent choice is central to learning and development. Children freely access a range of activities provided to engage and motivate interest. This means that children are encouraged to initiate their own learning through exploration and investigation.

Leadership provides a clear sense of purpose for all staff to enable all children to succeed as well as they can. Links with parents and carers are well established and this means that parents and carers are eager participants in their children's learning. Staff work together very effectively to rigorously and regularly assess and track children's progress. A range of recording opportunities enable staff to use their knowledge of what children can do to plan for what they need to learn next. Monitoring and evaluation of the setting is

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addressed through a cycle of improvement. This builds upon the existing good practice to further develop the use of child-initiated learning to inform future planning. Statutory requirements for the safeguarding of children are well established in line with those of the main school.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were highly positive about the school. They greatly appreciate the care given to their children and are confident that their children are happy and safe and that teachers meet their children's needs well. A few parents had individual questions regarding issues; there was no pattern to the issues raised. All were fully investigated by the inspection team and form part of the evidence base used to secure the inspection judgements.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Saint Benedict's Roman Catholic VA Primary School 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 100 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 425 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	70	70	28	28	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	70	70	30	30	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	53	53	44	44	1	1	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	57	57	42	42	0	0	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	60	60	39	39	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	53	53	42	42	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	50	50	48	48	1	1	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)	53	53	41	41	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	56	56	42	42	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	43	50	50	3	3	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	39	39	55	55	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	69	69	29	29	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	73	73	26	26	0	0	1	1

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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.



2 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Saint Benedict's Roman Catholic VA Primary School, Redcar, TS10 1LS

It was lovely to meet all of you when I and the other inspectors visited your school recently. We did enjoy talking to you and were extremely impressed by your outstanding behaviour and the way in which you care for others. We thought that your understanding of how to help others to follow a healthy lifestyle and keep fit was exceptional.

Yours is a good school and we know that you know this because you told us how much you enjoy school. St Benedict's has outstanding qualities because at its very heart is the care, guidance and support it gives to you and your families. Lots of other people help the staff at your school to make sure that when you are upset or are going through changes in your lives you get the support you need. Your parents and carers recognise that you are extremely well looked after and they help by making sure that you attend school regularly.

We would like your school to become even better by making a few changes to help some of the younger pupils in Key Stage 1. We would like teachers to help these pupils to learn faster and work at higher levels than they do at the moment by:

- planning more challenging activities for the different abilities so that everyone has opportunities to achieve more
- making sure that marking in books clearly shows where pupils have achieved targets and what they need to do to be even better.

Well done to all of you who contribute to a very special and caring school

Yours sincerely

Mrs Kate Pringle
Lead Inspector

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