

St Chad's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 103844 |
| Local Authority | Dudley |
| Inspection number | 367358 |
| Inspection dates | 12–13 May 2011 |
| Reporting inspector | Graham Sims |

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 | 208 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mary Ward |
| Headteacher | Sharon Mason |
| Date of previous school inspection | 21 February 2008 |
| School address | Catholic Lane Sedgley DY3 3UE |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited every class to gain an overview of the quality of teaching and learning, and then observed 11 lessons taught by seven different teachers. The inspection team had meetings with the school's leaders and staff, groups of pupils and representatives of the governing body. They observed the school's work, and looked in detail at pupils' books, a range of documentation, policies and monitoring records. They scrutinised data on pupils' attainment. The inspectors received and analysed the responses to questionnaires from 61 parents and carers, 117 pupils and six staff.

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

- How effective is the school in ensuring boys and girls make equally good progress from their varying starting points?
- How successful is the teaching in Key Stage 1 in ensuring pupils make good progress and achieve well?
- How supportive is the school in ensuring pupils develop independence, initiative and enterprise?
- How effective is the school in assessing pupils' progress and using assessment to ensure that work is matched to pupils' needs and provides sufficient challenge?

Information about the school

St Chad's Catholic Primary School is an average-sized primary school with seven classes, one for each year group. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, but the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The school has Healthy School status, the sports Activemark and the Leading Parent Partnership Award. Each morning, a private provider runs a breakfast club for around 20 pupils on the school premises.

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

St Chad's Catholic Primary School is a good school. Pupils achieve well; they make good progress in English and mathematics and their attainment is above average. Of those parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire, the great majority are very pleased with what the school offers. Pupils speak highly of their school and are enthusiastic about the wide range of activities on offer; this is reflected in their attendance, which is above average. The staff and governing body work together well as a team to provide a caring environment which reflects the school's religious aims. The school's positive and inclusive ethos supports pupils and staff in establishing strong relationships with each other.

Pupils' good behaviour is a strong feature of the school. The pupils are polite and welcoming. They care about each other and older pupils take on opportunities to help younger ones around the school. Pupils' behaviour makes a strong contribution to good learning in lessons. The pupils listen attentively, even when the teacher spends too much time talking. They are cooperative and are keen to do well. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe. They choose to eat healthily and enjoy participating in sporting activities. They make regular contributions to the school, the local and wider communities through their engagement in a variety of activities and fund-raising events.

The teaching is effective in securing good progress. By the time they leave the school, almost all pupils reach expected levels in English and mathematics and many exceed this level. Pupils' good academic achievement and their well-developed personal skills equip them well for the future. However, the school does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to use their initiative and develop independence as learners. The school keeps a careful track of how well pupils are doing and identifies when particular pupils need additional support. Good provision for those pupils ensures that few fall behind. Pupils' work is marked regularly, but teachers are not critical enough when pupils make mistakes and their comments do not help pupils understand how they could improve their work. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities and the curriculum is very thorough in its coverage of the basic skills. The strong focus on religious education provides plenty of opportunity for pupils to consolidate their skills in reading and writing, speaking and listening. However, pupils' topic work, which encompasses subjects such as history, geography and design and technology, is much more limited and does not offer sufficient scope to develop independent learning skills or raise their basic skills to even higher levels.

The school demonstrates good capacity for sustaining improvement. The school's leaders have been successful in maintaining high standards. Leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and have identified pertinent priorities for development in the school's development plan. The focus this year, for example, on developing investigative

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work in science has been highly successful and pupils comment appreciatively on how much they enjoy their science lessons now.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to use their initiative and develop independence by:
 - ensuring teachers do not spend too long introducing lessons or directing pupils' activities unnecessarily
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to conduct independent research and take responsibility for their own learning
 - providing larger-scale projects and opportunities which pupils can direct and through which they can develop enterprise capabilities
- Help pupils to achieve even higher standards by improving the quality of teachers' marking, in particular by:
 - being more critical of pupils' work when pupils make mistakes or there is room for improvement
 - providing comments which help pupils understand how they can improve their work.
- Improve the curriculum by broadening the range and scope of topic work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The school carried out its own assessments at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2010, which were based on earlier national tests and were moderated by a partner school. Those assessments, current assessment data and the work in pupils' books show that the attainment of the oldest pupils is above average in both English and mathematics. Almost half of the pupils are working at a level which is above that expected for their age. In a last-minute revision session before their final national test, pupils in Year 6 showed great confidence in dealing with questions from a previous year's paper. Pupils in Year 5 demonstrated very good choice of vocabulary in their writing describing the emotions of a piano player, which they developed over the two days of the inspection. In all of the lessons observed during the inspection, the pupils' good behaviour, positive attitudes and willingness to collaborate were consistently good features contributing to their learning. The work in their books for English, mathematics, science and religious education shows that they are highly productive over the course of the year and that they consolidate their skills well. There are slight differences in the progress of boys and girls in different subjects, but there has been no consistent pattern over recent years. Pupils do not make quite as much progress in Key Stage 1 as they do in Key Stage 2. These differences do not, however, have a major impact on pupils' progress overall.

Because the school keeps a close check on pupils' progress, pupils' needs are identified at an early stage. Although only employed on a part-time basis, the special educational needs coordinator is able to devote all of her time to meeting the needs of these pupils and identifying the most suitable type of support to enable them to catch up. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress.

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Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils' spiritual awareness is developed well through the many opportunities for prayer, weekly attendance at Mass in the neighbouring church and daily religious education lessons. Pupils learn well also about different cultures and the practices of other religious faiths. Pupils feel safe in school because they are looked after well and they say that bullying is almost non-existent. They acknowledge that there is occasional misbehaviour, but say that it is short lived and is dealt with well. One parent wrote 'I have been on many class trips and have been proud to be part of the school when out in public with the children. They are well mannered and polite and a joy to be with.' Pupils display a good degree of self-confidence, but the school does not do enough to develop their independence. Many pupils are over-reliant on adults for direction. Apart from some self-directed fund-raising opportunities, pupils do not have enough opportunity to use their initiative or develop enterprise capabilities.

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 | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| 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' learning, the work in their books and the thoroughness with which basic skills are taught indicate that the quality of the teaching over time is good. Pupils relate well to their teachers, show very good discipline in the classroom and follow teachers' directions well. A parent volunteer wrote 'I have been very impressed with the teaching and how happy and fulfilled the children are.' The quality of the teaching observed during the inspection did not, however, reflect fully the overall picture of pupils' progress. Good teaching was

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certainly evident in some lessons as pupils were challenged, for example, to plan and develop a piece of writing and reflect on how they could enliven their vocabulary. In other lessons, the teacher spent far too long introducing the lesson and, when it was clear that pupils had grasped firmly what was being taught, did not move them on to more challenging work quickly enough. Assessment procedures, however, are thorough and teachers are meticulous in identifying what has been taught and understood by different groups of pupils and what still needs to be taught. Lesson plans are adapted in the light of these assessments and pupils are given pertinent targets which, they say, help them to know what they need to improve. Although pupils are making good progress, they are not yet 'in top gear', as there are not enough opportunities for pupils to become independent learners, to take risks or to learn from mistakes. Their work is marked regularly and is assessed against specific objectives, but teachers are reluctant to point out where pupils have made mistakes or how a good piece of work could be improved even further.

The curriculum provides a good grounding in basic skills. As a Catholic school, far more time is spent on religious education than in most schools, but the large amount of written work in this subject helps to consolidate pupils' writing skills. The school identified weaknesses in the way science was being taught and has made good improvements to this aspect of the curriculum. Pupils said that science lessons are now much more interesting because they get to carry out experiments. The school has also introduced a cross-curricular approach to teaching subjects such as art and design, design and technology, history and geography. However, there is not yet enough depth to the teaching of these topics. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular enrichment through after-school activities, visits and special events.

The school is a caring community. One parent wrote 'The school provides a positive and nurturing place for my child to grow and learn.' Thorough attention is paid to all aspects of health and safety. Staff know the pupils well and there are good procedures for identifying needs and providing additional support. Pupils with physical disability are integrated well. A parent whose child receives additional support wrote 'I am very happy with his progress. The staff have done a great job with him. They have nurtured him and pushed him in the right direction.' Pupils in Year 6 feel they have been prepared well for their transition to secondary school.

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 | 2 |

How effective are leadership and management?

The school's leaders have maintained the good quality of education noted at the last inspection. The school's self-evaluation process has identified appropriate priorities for

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improvement and progress on developing these issues is monitored regularly. The school has well-established routines and sets itself suitably ambitious targets. Responsibilities are delegated effectively. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties well and has become far more active in monitoring what happens in the school in response to an issue raised in the previous inspection report. Each class has a link governor, whose picture is displayed prominently outside each classroom and who supports the class in its activities and monitors the subject for which the class teacher is responsible.

Relationships with parents and carers are positive, as reflected in the school's recent Leading Parent Partnership Award. The great majority of parents and carers are pleased with what the school offers to their children. The school has sought to provide parents and carers with more detailed information about their children's progress in addition to the termly consultation evenings. Pupils explained how their parents and carers access information on-line and can see how much progress they have made in the previous half term and how well they are doing compared with other pupils. Partnerships with other agencies, the local network of schools and other Catholic schools are strong and contribute well to pupils' learning, for example, by developing pupils' understanding of safety through contacts with the police, the fire service and the road safety department.

Safeguarding procedures are good. The school ensures that all adults who come into contact with pupils are carefully vetted. The governing body checks that safeguarding procedures are being carried out properly. The environment is safe, and health and safety checks and risk assessments are carried out regularly. The school has undertaken an audit to identify the religious, ethnic and socio-economic make-up of the community and has put an action plan in place. There are good links with parish communities and there is a structured annual plan to provide a range of multicultural visits. Through its regular monitoring of pupils' progress, the school ensures that it provides equality of opportunity for all pupils. Support staff are effective in providing one-to-one tuition when required and there is additional support for identified groups of pupils to ensure that they do not fall behind. The school takes active steps to tackle discrimination. In their discussion with inspectors, for example, pupils provided a good example of how staff are effective in helping them to understand how their actions and comments might be hurtful to others.

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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 | 2 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 2 |
| 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 the Reception class with skills levels that are fairly typical for children of their age, except in their personal, social and emotional development. In this aspect, children are very dependent on adults to direct and support them and they lack independence. Children make good progress in their first year in most areas of learning and attainment is generally above average by the time they enter Year 1. At that stage, particular strengths are in reading, in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy and in their physical and creative development. Progress in writing, particularly for boys, is only satisfactory and attainment in writing is broadly average at the end of the year.

Although more formal than in many schools, the teaching and the curriculum produce good outcomes. There is a suitable balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities, although in some adult-led sessions the children are kept sitting for far too long with not enough stimulus or variety of activity. Children are divided into ability groups for their main teaching sessions and additional needs are met through the provision of intervention groups or by enabling a more-able pupil to participate in some lessons in the year above. Children behave safely and cooperate well with each other, sharing and taking turns. Some children, however, find it hard to choose what to do or act independently and they lack perseverance when carrying out tasks.

The indoor classroom is a bright, attractive well-resourced learning area, with resources accessible to the children easily. Children also have access to a secure outside area with a range of large apparatus. Child protection and first-aid procedures are good. Effective links have been established with parents and carers, particularly at the introductory meeting before children start, and there are on-going suggestions for parents and carers to support their children's learning at home. Regular assessments of children's progress are carried out. A range of initiatives has been introduced to improve children's writing and

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the school has taken seriously the desire to appeal to boys' interests in the activities offered. However, leaders have yet to evaluate the impact of these initiatives.

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 responses to the parental questionnaire were extremely positive. A very small number of parents and carers voiced concerns about the school's response to particular individual circumstances or felt that their views were not taken into consideration. However, other parents and carers expressed great satisfaction with the way the school had dealt with issues affecting their children. The inspection team found the school to be a very happy and harmonious community and considered the very small number of concerns to be unrepresentative of the great majority. A few parents and carers feel the school does not offer enough opportunities for some subjects, such as art and design, music and physical education, music. While these subjects are not major strengths of the school, pupils were able to show inspectors that these subjects are not neglected.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Chad's Catholic 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 61 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 208 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 32 | 52 | 27 | 44 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 40 | 66 | 21 | 34 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress | 30 | 49 | 29 | 48 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 30 | 49 | 29 | 48 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 30 | 49 | 31 | 51 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 25 | 41 | 32 | 52 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 30 | 49 | 30 | 49 | 1 | 2 | 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) | 25 | 41 | 31 | 51 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 26 | 43 | 32 | 52 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 24 | 39 | 29 | 48 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 5 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 24 | 39 | 31 | 51 | 4 | 7 | 2 | 3 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 28 | 46 | 29 | 48 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 31 | 51 | 29 | 48 | 1 | 2 | 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

| | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
| Type of school | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools | 46 | 48 | 6 | 0 |
| Primary schools | 6 | 47 | 40 | 7 |
| Secondary schools | 12 | 39 | 38 | 11 |
| Sixth forms | 13 | 42 | 41 | 3 |
| Special schools | 28 | 49 | 19 | 4 |
| Pupil referral units | 14 | 45 | 31 | 10 |
| All schools | 10 | 46 | 37 | 7 |

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



16 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Chad's Catholic Primary School, Dudley, DY3 3UE

My colleagues and I enjoyed our visit to your school. We should like to thank all of you for making us feel welcome and to give particular thanks to those who took the time to talk to us. It was very clear that you like your school. You said that you are receiving a good education. We agree with you. These are our main findings.

You achieve well, particularly in English and mathematics, and many of you reach standards which are above those expected for your age.

You behave well; you listen politely and attentively in class, even when your teachers spend too long introducing lessons; you are cooperative and helpful.

You make good progress over time because the teaching is effective in helping you, although some of the lessons we saw were rather slow and did not provide you with enough challenge.

You enjoy practical work and special activities best, but you also complete a lot of written work which helps you to practise and consolidate your skills.

The staff take good care of you; you feel there is always someone to help you if needed and this enables you to feel safe in school.

The school's leaders have maintained good standards and have brought about improvements, such as enabling you to carry out investigations in science.

To help you to make even better progress in your work, we have asked the school to provide more opportunities for you to develop as independent learners and to provide a broader range of more challenging topic work. We have also asked your teachers to be more critical when marking your work and to provide you with more helpful comments which show you what to do to improve. You can play your part by checking your work carefully, by rising to new challenges and by trying your hardest.

We hope that those of you in Year 6 did as well as you deserve in your national tests and that you enjoy your forthcoming residential trip. We wish you all every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Graham Sims

Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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