

St John Bosco Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108844
Local Authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	363740
Inspection dates	15–16 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Margaret Armstrong

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	195
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Ian McDonough
Headteacher	Mrs Anne Mackay
Date of previous school inspection	5 March 2008
School address	Bradford Avenue Sunderland Tyne and Wear SR5 4JW
Telephone number	0191 553 6921
Fax number	0191 553 6923
Email address	stjohn.bosco.primary@schools.sunderland.gov.uk

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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 12 lessons, taught by eight different teachers, and held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors looked in detail at the following: the school development plan and safeguarding policies; the school's data on pupils' progress; and systems for monitoring the quality of teaching. They also analysed and scrutinised responses in 125 questionnaires returned by parents and carers. Staff' and pupils' questionnaires were also scrutinised by the inspection team.

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

- How well children achieve in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The quality of teaching and learning and its effectiveness in accelerating pupils' progress and raising achievement for all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- How effectively leaders and managers monitor, review and evaluate the impact of their actions on outcomes for pupils.

Information about the school

This is smaller than the average primary school. It has been in a soft federation with English Martyrs' Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School since September 2008. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, although a higher-than-average number of pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The school has achieved Healthy School status and Activemark. It offers a number of learning opportunities for families.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

St John Bosco is an outstanding school where every child really does matter. The visionary headteacher leads a very enthusiastic team who ensure pupils receive high levels of care and education. As a result pupils are extremely happy, enjoy school and have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. An overwhelming proportion of parents and carers support the excellent progress their children make, and speak very positively of, 'The lovely school which is a little part of the Kingdom of Heaven.'

From entry points well-below those expected for their age, all groups make exceptional progress leaving with levels which are above national averages. Achievement is outstanding. The good start children make in the Early Years Foundation Stage continues and accelerates through the school, building successfully upon previous achievement towards very challenging targets. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils who are vulnerable due to their circumstances progress as well as their peers as a result of highly effective support. Teaching is outstanding. Pupils thoroughly enjoy lessons and join in all activities with great enthusiasm. Both they and their teachers have an excellent understanding of how well they are learning and how they can improve. This helps them to work rapidly and be rightly proud of their achievements at the end of the lesson. A highly innovative and rich curriculum enables pupils to follow their own enquiries and make personal choices. This fosters pupils' engagement, enthusiasm and the desire to learn and explore.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils show very good respect for themselves and others and follow the excellent example set by adults in caring and supporting others. Older pupils relish the opportunities to look after younger ones and all pupils are eager to serve the school and wider community in any way they can. The school council is a driving force in gathering pupils' views and making improvements to the school. Pupils say this makes them feel valued and important. Pupils' attendance is average and improving. Although the school has been successful in improving punctuality, the attendance of a few pupils remains low.

The purposeful working relationships of the highly effective leaders demonstrate an outstanding commitment to maintain and build upon the very strong Christian ethos which pervades this school. The school evaluates itself very well. As a result areas identified at the last inspection have been successfully addressed. Excellent partnerships with specialist agencies, the parish church and the partner school contribute to the outstanding outcomes of the school. All of these successes indicate the school has an outstanding capacity to improve further.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the rate of attendance by:
 - implementing a robust action plan to reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent
 - extending the school's strategies for promoting good attendance.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils enjoy school and have excellent attitudes to learning. They arrive punctually, respond very well in lessons and take great pride in their work. Pupils work very productively and are extremely interested in their learning. In all lessons they tackle any challenge with energy and a strong belief that they will succeed. Exemplary relationships ensure that pupils behave very well and are motivated to learn. From low starting points all pupils make excellent progress and attain above average standards by the end of Year 6. Consequently, achievement is outstanding for all groups of learners, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The dedication of the school in providing an environment in which pupils can improve their self-esteem has been highly effective. Pupils talk very enthusiastically about the interesting experiences the school offers them. They thoroughly enjoy the wide range of physical activities provided and are extremely knowledgeable about the importance of keeping safe in school and within the community. They have an excellent understanding of what makes a healthy lifestyle. Pupils are very proud of the contributions they make to the school. They act very responsibly as 'monitors' and 'buddies' and actively support community events. The very good grounding pupils receive in their social and basic skills alongside their improving attendance prepare them well for the next stages of learning.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils fully understand the Christian principles which underpin the highly positive ethos of respect and consideration for others. They have a strong sense of reverence as seen in time for reflection and prayer and in their 'Personal Prayer Journals'. Pupils are sensitive to the needs of others, have a strong sense of right and wrong and are tolerant of differences.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

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?

All teaching is at least good and a high proportion is outstanding. This is because teachers base their lesson planning on excellent assessment practices. Pupils' learning is well tracked so that teachers always set appropriate challenges and provide the right level of support for pupils to succeed. Their marking and feedback to pupils on how to improve are well understood and acted upon by pupils of all ages so they become increasingly skilled at evaluating their own progress. Teachers understand how their pupils learn best and in lessons provide an excellent balance of teacher input and pupil activity. A strong feature of lessons is the collaboration between pupils, either as talk partners clarifying ideas, or team players working together to solve problems. Excellent relationships between teachers and pupils underpin pupils' drive to work very productively and be successful. Teaching assistants are highly skilled and well briefed for their role. They work extremely well alongside the class teachers to support pupils of all abilities to meet their targets.

The curriculum is extremely well planned and modified to meet the needs of all pupils. It ensures that pupils are supported to meet their targets in basic skills, so that they can access and enjoy the rest of the exciting curriculum. Creative partnerships have brought a wealth of new learning to pupils, providing memorable experiences and helping them to see connections across subjects. Cross-curricular links abound, helping pupils to consolidate their basic skills through exciting opportunities to use their literacy, numeracy

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and information and communication technology skills in 'real situations'. A wealth of educational visits and visitors, a wide range of sporting activities and many opportunities to participate and perform in front of others enable all pupils to find their own talent. Pupils benefit tremendously from a wide range of experiences outside school. They talked excitedly about their experiences of participating in the Town End Farm Carnival and their enjoyment of the residential visit to Derwent Hill Outdoor Centre.

The outstanding pastoral care pupils receive from the headteacher and staff results in exemplary behaviour and a very caring atmosphere in and around school. Well established and very effective lines of communication ensure that parents and carers are well informed, and opportunities for them to engage with and support their children are highly effective. The strongly inclusive ethos of the school and teachers' excellent knowledge of pupils ensures that concerns are quickly addressed. Very close working with external agencies means that support for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable is rapid and effective involving a breadth of specialist expertise. Although attendance is improving, action taken by the school has not been rigorous enough to reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The visionary leadership and very clear aspirations of the headteacher are shared by all leaders and managers. Teachers are very supportive of the school and of each other. They lead their individual areas well and work very effectively as a team to tackle issues from the last inspection. Consequently, the school is highly effective in promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination. Leaders make very effective use of a range of monitoring activities to improve the quality of teaching and other aspects of provision. Consequently, monitoring and evaluation demonstrate a significant impact upon many areas of the school's development and the school has a precise measure of the quality of teaching and learning.

The strong commitment to community cohesion is very firmly rooted within the Christian principles of the school. Excellent partnerships with specialist agencies, the parish church and its partner school broaden opportunities for learning and ensure pupils are well supported. Action is being taken to raise pupils' awareness of cultures in the United Kingdom. Governance is good. The governing body has extended its role in holding the school to account and is influential in determining the strategic direction of the school. There is a clear understanding of key responsibilities, especially of those which require robust assurance checks. As a result, safeguarding arrangements are outstanding,

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ensuring the safety and well-being of staff and pupils. Resources are managed extremely well to secure outstanding outcomes for pupils.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
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	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle well when they first start in the Nursery and quickly adapt to the daily routines. This is because adults are attentive, listen to the children and create conditions in which children feel welcomed, safe and secure. From low starting points children make good progress and achieve well. The majority reach the level expected at the start of Year 1, although this does vary from year-to-year depending on children's ability and readiness to learn.

Parents and carers are pleased with the start their children make. Induction arrangements are good and parents and carers appreciate the 'Weekend Journals' which ensure there is effective dialogue between home and school. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully integrated and benefit from high quality support. Teaching and learning in the Nursery and Reception class are good. Adults make regular observations and assessments to plan the next step of learning for each individual. Occasionally, opportunities to extend learning through activities children choose for themselves are missed. Activities, both inside and outside, are interesting and motivate children, helping them to enjoy their learning. Relationships are positive so children interact well with each other and with the dedicated staff. Leadership and management are good and there are appropriate plans in place to develop provision further. Arrangements to meet the health, safety and welfare of the children meet requirements.

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

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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 response rate from parents and carers to the Ofsted questionnaire was significantly higher than the national average for primary schools. These respondents were extremely positive about the school. They hold the headteacher and her staff in very high regard and greatly appreciate the care and support given to their children. They were particularly impressed with the way the school responds, not only to their children's needs, but also to the needs of parents and carers. They were confident that any concerns were listened to carefully and acted upon quickly. The school received much praise for the efforts it makes to provide a very caring environment in which pupils achieve very well. For example, one parent noted, 'My child has been given the best possible support in this school. A few individual concerns were not shared by the vast majority of parents and carers. Inspectors investigated these and discussed them with the headteacher. They found no cause for concern.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St John Bosco Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided 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 125 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 195 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	93	74	31	25	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	93	74	32	26	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	81	65	44	35	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	93	74	29	23	3	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	93	74	32	26	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	80	64	42	34	3	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	74	59	44	35	4	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)	78	62	46	37	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	83	66	38	30	3	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	73	58	43	34	5	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	69	55	50	40	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	85	68	38	30	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	96	77	29	23	0	0	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	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.



June 17 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St John Bosco Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, Sunderland, SR5 4JW

Thank you very much for making our recent visit to your school so enjoyable. We were made to feel very welcome and you looked after us very well indeed. We are delighted to tell you that we agree with those of you who told us your school was 'excellent' or 'brilliant', because we have judged it to be outstanding.

You make excellent progress in your learning, because you work hard and are determined, so that you are well prepared for the future with excellent personal qualities. Your behaviour is excellent and you care for each other very well. You play an important part in making the school better by planning activities for special events and doing so many good things in the community that help your school have a good reputation.

You have a very exciting and well-planned curriculum and the teaching you receive is excellent: your teachers know you so well that they set work at just the right level to stretch you to think hard. You feel safe, secure and happy in school and you have a very good understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle. Your attendance is improving but we have asked your school to work more closely with those pupils who do not attend regularly enough. The school is exceptionally well led and managed. Your headteacher has a very clear picture of how well you can do and she inspires the teachers to use all of their talents to help you succeed, and so you do very well!

You can continue to help by coming to school regularly, working as hard as you can and by helping each other in and around school. Thank you again for welcoming us to your school. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Armstrong

Lead inspector

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