

# St Bede's Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106945
<b>Local Authority</b>	Rotherham
<b>Inspection number</b>	356053
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 June 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Rosemary Eaton

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	327
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Martin McDonagh
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Helen McLaughlin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 February 2008
<b>School address</b>	Wortley Road Rotherham South Yorkshire S61 1PD
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Twelve lessons were observed, each taught by a different teacher. Meetings were held with parents and carers, groups of pupils, members of the governing body, staff, officers of the local authority and the headteacher designate. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents including external evaluations of the school's work, assessment information, safeguarding (systems to protect pupils and keep them safe) policies and records, and samples of pupils' work in English and mathematics. The 107 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were read and analysed.

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

- How well the school provides for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The effectiveness of teachers' use of assessment information to meet the needs of all groups of pupils.
- Whether there are signs that the changes introduced by leaders are having an impact on pupils' outcomes.
- How effectively the environment and teaching support children in the Early Years Foundation Stage when they are learning independently.

## Information about the school

This is a larger than average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much lower than average. Most pupils are White British and there are very few pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The school provides a breakfast club each morning for up to 24 pupils. There have been a number of temporary and permanent staff changes during the past two years. An associate headteacher has led the school since September 2010. She works for four days each week in St Bede's and the other day is spent in her own school. The local authority currently provides enhanced support for the school. A substantive headteacher and a deputy headteacher have been appointed for September 2011.

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. This year has seen its efforts focused squarely on improving teaching and learning in order to raise achievement. Information gained from accurate self-evaluation has been employed by the associate headteacher to establish rigorous and effective plans and hence a range of developments has taken place. Already there are signs of an impact on pupils' outcomes. Key Stage 1 pupils are reaching higher levels in reading and children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are making faster progress. Other leaders are becoming more involved in moving the school forward, governance is good, and the associate and future headteachers are working together to ensure a smooth transition and no loss of momentum. All this provides convincing evidence of the school's satisfactory capacity to continue to improve.

For some years attainment in mathematics has been weaker than that in English and pupils make slowest progress in mathematics. The mathematics curriculum does not ensure that pupils' skills build up progressively year on year, so younger pupils sometimes tackle harder work than others who are older. Additionally, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise and apply their mathematics skills in other subjects.

Teachers are clear about what they intend pupils to learn during lessons and they ensure that pupils too are aware of what they are learning, not just what they are doing. Assessment arrangements have been tightened and teachers are starting to make better use of the useful information they have about each pupil's stage of development. However, there is not enough good teaching to enable pupils to make any more than steady progress. Lessons do not always provide the right amount of challenge for all groups of pupils. Instead, work can be too hard or too easy for some pupils. There are examples of helpful marking but it is too often cursory and does not indicate high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve.

Some aspects of the school's work are good. Effective care, guidance and support, enhanced by strong partnerships with a range of agencies, have a positive impact on pupils' behaviour and attendance and ensure that they feel safe in school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is reflected in their appreciation of ideas such as freedom and responsibility. The provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is another of the school's strengths.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Ensure that teaching is consistently good or better, focusing particularly on improving:

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- the use of assessment information to provide the right amount of challenge for all pupils in the class
- marking, so it is consistently helpful and requires pupils to act on the advice they are given
- the way in which lesson time is used, so that plenty of it is allowed for pupils to learn independently and they spend less of it listening to teachers.
- Improve attainment and progress in mathematics by:
  - ensuring that the mathematics curriculum offers a structured framework for learning in all aspects of the subject
  - providing more practical resources to aid pupils' understanding
  - planning more opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematics skills in many different subjects and situations
  - making sure that teachers consistently apply the school's agreed policy for teaching pupils to calculate.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Pupils arrive at lessons ready to learn. They are often enthusiastic learners and they particularly enjoy practical activities such as science investigations, learning through games and using information and communication technology. Their motivation sometimes tails off, particularly when they are kept together as a whole class for too long, answering questions or listening to the teacher. On such occasions pupils' lack of interest shows itself in fidgeting and muted responses. Pupils work together well. Many are able to work without adult support and they concentrate well when the tasks are stimulating and demand that they make enough effort. Pupils' books show that in some classes they do not feel compelled to take enough care over the presentation of their work or pay enough attention to spelling and punctuation.

At the start of the Nursery year children's skills are broadly in line with the expectations for their age. After making good progress during the Early Years Foundation Stage progress is satisfactory overall during the rest of their time in school, so attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 6. However, there are variations in progress in line with the quality of teaching in particular classes. In general, progress tends to be faster in writing and slower in mathematics. The current Key Stage 1 pupils are making better progress in reading as a result of an investment in exciting new resources and a fresh and more consistent approach to teaching this aspect of English. The school's data and inspection evidence suggest that more Year 2 pupils are reaching level 3 in reading. However, there are clear indications that mathematics remains the weaker area of pupils' work by the time they leave the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are making satisfactory progress. For some this represents an improvement and results from teachers taking more account of their particular needs. Pupils learning English as an additional language often make good progress because the school makes special arrangements to support them.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They learn about issues such as how to use the internet safely. Behaviour is good in lessons and around school. Pupils are welcoming and care about each other, reflecting their good moral and social development. The few who

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have difficulty controlling their behaviour usually respond well to the school's strategies. 'I don't get as angry now', remarked one pupil. Pupils take on responsibilities such as being playground leaders or members of the school council. They regularly raise funds for charities but seldom initiate such activities and, though they have links with the local community, they are not involved in projects to improve it. Pupils respond very positively to the many opportunities for them to pray and to reflect on their feelings and beliefs. They are interested in and respect other cultures, although they have few chances to work and play with pupils from communities that are different from their own. Pupils' basic skills, particularly in mathematics, are not developed well enough to assure them more than a satisfactory start to their secondary education.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

<sup>1</sup> 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?**

Teachers have worked successfully this year to make stronger links between different subjects, so pupils see the relevance of what they learn. For instance, those in Years 3 and 4 appreciate that the ability to write a formal letter allows them to express concerns about topics such as the destruction of rainforests. The skills of teaching assistants are deployed effectively and they contribute well to lessons. There are now more and better opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas prior to writing them down and for them to collaborate when writing or reading. Teachers usually attempt to match work to what different groups need to learn next. They do not always manage this successfully enough

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and at times higher-attaining pupils are not expected to work at high enough levels while others need too much adult support to enable them to cope with their tasks. Marking is too variable. There are some good examples of pupils being informed clearly about how they can improve. Sometimes though, mistakes, including calculations in mathematics, go uncorrected and there is little evidence of pupils being required to follow any advice they are given. The school has recently agreed how calculation will be taught, but this policy is not yet followed consistently.

The curriculum meets pupils' needs satisfactorily in most respects, but the arrangements for mathematics are not well developed. More guidance and structure is needed to ensure that pupils' learning builds securely and quickly on what they have learned already. There are not enough resources, such as ones to illustrate fractions of different sizes, that pupils can handle and so improve their understanding. There are some good opportunities for pupils to practise reading and writing in different subjects, but similar ones for mathematics are much less evident. Learning and particularly personal development are enhanced by interesting visits, residential experiences, and a good range of popular clubs.

The learning mentor is central to the arrangements to support pupils whose circumstances make them most vulnerable. There are impressive examples of how particular pupils have been helped to overcome obstacles to their learning and development. Pupils are prepared very well for transition at the end of Year 6, supported by the school's strong links with secondary schools. A breakfast club provides a very friendly and enjoyable start to the day and one which is much appreciated by parents and carers. Revisions to the arrangements for meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities mean that this provision is satisfactory. These improvements have started to have an impact on pupils' progress but need more time to become embedded firmly.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The associate headteacher's leadership has been of crucial importance in moving the school forward on all fronts. Her considerable expertise has been channelled to this purpose with an excellent balance of sensitivity and uncompromising determination. As one middle leader explained, changes 'have been introduced in steps'. Local authority officers and consultants are readily available to the school and provide another dimension of support and challenge to staff. Considerable efforts have been made to improve teaching and learning, for example, by agreeing 'non-negotiable' elements. Despite this work, there has not been time to eliminate all inconsistencies in teaching. Staff are being helped to develop their leadership skills through training and opportunities to analyse

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assessment information and plan for future developments. The governing body shows a clear determination to challenge and support the school as it tackles areas of comparative weakness. Its members have a sharp awareness of what is working and where more improvement is needed, including by finding out at first hand, and they are prepared to take decisive actions.

Current safeguarding requirements are met. The arrangements for recruiting and vetting new staff are rigorous. Some other procedures have been recently revised and some fine-tuning is still taking place. The school believes strongly in providing all pupils with equality of opportunity. As a result, for example, additional support is provided for pupils who speak English as an additional language. Currently, inconsistencies in teaching mean that pupils in some classes learn faster than those in others. Pupils form a cohesive community and the school has strong links within its parish. Other Catholic schools, including the associate headteacher's own, are sources of great support. The school has clear plans to extend its contacts with other communities locally and globally.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children make good progress and by the end of the Reception year most are securely within the expected levels in all areas of learning. Learning begins as soon as children arrive each morning and select from a wealth of interesting activities. All adults provide good support to children when they are learning independently, using questions effectively to check their understanding and encourage them to extend their thinking. Indoors and outside, children's imagination is captured by opportunities such as planting potatoes, making a bag for their farm shop or recording bookings for its campsite. Running alongside these experiences are activities led by adults in order to teach specific skills such as addition or writing. The information gathered about each child is used well to inform



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planning. Parents and carers are kept well-informed about their child's learning and are encouraged to play their own part in building up a picture of their progress, for example, by adding a leaf to the 'learning tree'. The provision is overseen and led well by the enthusiastic coordinator. She has ensured that although staff changes led to some slippage in provision last year, lost ground has been made up entirely and the setting is moving forward apace. Staff are committed and work closely together, with children's welfare given high priority. They are currently working towards developing the outdoor area further, in order to provide enhanced opportunities for role play.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

Most parents and carers have positive views about the school and their children's experiences. A small number expressed concerns about bullying and how it is managed. The inspectors looked closely at this issue. Pupils report that bullying does happen but they are confident that the school deals with it at once. Any reported incidents are recorded comprehensively by the school and these records show that there is a planned and well-established process for dealing with unacceptable behaviour of any sort. The provision of homework is also a concern to a few parents and carers. The school's leaders agree that homework is not provided consistently and a policy is to be developed and shared with parents and carers. Several parents wrote positively about the support they and their children have received with regard to learning and behaviour. A number have noted with pleasure the changes introduced to the school during the current year.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Bede'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 107 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 327 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	61	57	37	35	4	4	4	4
The school keeps my child safe	59	55	44	41	2	2	2	2
My school informs me about my child's progress	40	37	52	49	9	8	5	5
My child is making enough progress at this school	42	39	54	50	7	7	4	4
The teaching is good at this school	44	41	49	46	9	8	4	4
The school helps me to support my child's learning	40	37	52	49	11	10	3	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	47	44	51	48	5	5	3	3
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)	47	44	47	44	4	4	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	49	46	47	44	5	5	5	5
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	40	37	44	41	14	13	9	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	41	38	48	45	9	8	5	5
The school is led and managed effectively	45	42	36	34	19	18	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	54	50	39	36	8	7	6	6

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

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

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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



30 June 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Bede's Catholic Primary School, Rotherham, S61 1PD**

Thank you for being so friendly and polite when we inspected your school. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing you at work and play. We particularly enjoyed hearing your singing during assembly. It was very moving. We have judged that yours is a satisfactory school. There are some things about it that are good.

- The children in Red and Yellow units make good progress and have fun taking part in exciting activities.
- You behave well and told us that you feel safe in school.
- Your attendance is better than that of pupils in many other schools.
- The school provides you with good care, guidance and support.
- You care about and are interested in other people and their beliefs and you value and understand ideas such as freedom and responsibility.
- The governing body does its job well.
- Your school is moving forward because the associate headteacher knows just what needs to be done and how to achieve this.

To help you make faster progress and reach higher levels, we have asked the school to do two things.

- We want all the teaching to be as good as the best. All of you need to have work that is just hard enough. Your work should be marked so that you know how to improve it. You need plenty of time to do your own work or to work with a partner or group.
- We want the school to help you make faster progress in mathematics so you reach higher levels. We have suggested several ways the school can do this.

You can play your part by making sure you follow the advice teachers give you when they mark your books and by continuing to try hard.

Yours sincerely

Rosemary Eaton  
Lead Inspector

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