

The Saint Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Stamford

Inspection report

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 120610 |
| Local Authority | Lincolnshire |
| Inspection number | 380073 |
| Inspection dates | 4–5 October 2011 |
| Reporting inspector | Joanne Harvey HMI |

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 | 132 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Joe Scott |
| Headteacher | Sue Hooley |
| Date of previous school inspection | 9 July 2009 |
| School address | Kesteven Road Stamford PE9 1SR |
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|---------------------------|------------------|
| Age group | 4–11 |
| Inspection date(s) | 4–5 October 2011 |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. Eight lessons were observed and eight teachers seen. Inspectors held meetings with representatives of the governing body, groups of pupils, leaders at all levels, teachers, the Early Years Foundation Stage leader and the special educational needs coordinator. They observed the school's work and looked at the school development plan, assessment information, school and local authority (LA) monitoring information, lesson plans and school policies. The team analysed 52 questionnaires from parents and carers, together with questionnaires from staff and a representative sample from pupils. The school is federated with a Catholic primary school in Rutland. Separate inspection teams inspected both schools simultaneously.

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

- Are all pupils making progress quickly enough in mathematics?
- Is enough being done to make sure that pupils do not get left behind in reading and writing?
- Are adults providing activities which motivate all pupils and which challenge them to make at least good progress?
- Have leaders made improvements across the school swiftly and securely enough since the last inspection?

Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average sized school. The proportion of pupils eligible to claim free school meals is similar to most schools. The majority of pupils are White British; a very small minority speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is smaller than in most schools. Higher proportions of pupils than in most schools start and leave the school other than at the usual times. Pupils are taught in six classes. There are single-age classes in the Early Years Foundation Stage, Year 1, Year 2 and Year 6. There is a mixed Year 3 and 4 class and a mixed Year 4 and Year 5 class. A privately-run nursery operates on the school site which is reported on separately. The school has the Activemark and Healthy Schools status.

In January 2011, a hard federation was formed with English Martyrs' Catholic Primary School in a different local authority. The headteacher spends equal time between both schools which share one governing body.

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

Improvements have been made in this recently federated school despite a period of considerable staffing turbulence. With the good leadership and strategic steer of the headteacher, staff and governors are working together to successfully address the issues raised at the last inspection and to quicken the pace of school improvement. The school provides a positive and welcoming environment. Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their above-average levels of attendance and good behaviour.

Attainment has been broadly average in recent years in English and mathematics when pupils leave the school. This represents satisfactory progress for most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The inspection evidence confirms that, for an increasing number of pupils, progress is quickening and attainment is set to rise as a result of the recent improvements to the school. Pupils in the current Years 5 and 6, for example, are on track to reach above average attainment in English. At Key Stage 1, pupils are now on track to achieve well in mathematics. Some other pupils are on track to achieve the highest level of which they are capable, but not all. Leaders have rightly identified that too much variation remains and there is a legacy of previous underachievement in reading and writing at Key Stage 1. In addition, pupils do not all make as much progress in mathematics at Key Stage 2 as they do in English. Children get off to a satisfactory start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The provision for them has recently been overhauled appropriately. However, the school's arrangements are very new and the leadership of this phase of learning is not strong enough to quickly drive improvements to the quality of provision.

Teaching has improved since the last inspection. Its impact over time is mostly satisfactory, but the proportion of good teaching has increased and there is some outstanding teaching. There is not yet enough of this strong practice to secure consistently good progress for all pupils. A very small proportion of inadequate teaching remains to be tackled. Inconsistencies remain in how well teachers plan to meet the needs of pupils of different ability, tackle misconceptions and give them feedback to help them to improve. Although satisfactory, the curriculum is enriched well and ensures pupils' engagement and the development of good personal skills. However, new curriculum planning to ensure progression of knowledge and skills and the highest expectations for all has only just been introduced this term. Similarly, leaders in English and mathematics have introduced new strategies for planning and teaching these subjects. These initiatives have yet to be rigorously applied and monitored across school.

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The school has demonstrated its satisfactory capacity to continue to improve. Statutory duties are met suitably but the school does not check that policies to promote health, safety and welfare are applied and recorded. It has effective systems for evaluating its work accurately. Resulting action plans for improvement and information provided to governors are detailed but lack sufficient focus on pupils' learning and measurable outcomes against clear benchmarks. Leaders for English and mathematics are now playing their part in the cycle of self-evaluation, strategic planning and staff development. The full impact of this work has yet to be realised and evaluated. Work with the federation partner school is at an early stage of development and potential opportunities to devolve and strengthen leadership have not yet been fully exploited.

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?

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics to be consistently above average across school by:
 - rigorously applying new curriculum plans to ensure progression of pupils' knowledge and skills so that they all reach the levels of which they are capable
 - ensuring everyone is using the school's new strategies to teach basic skills in reading and writing and problem solving in mathematics equally effectively.
- Ensure that the quality of teaching and learning and the rate at which pupils make progress are at least good by:
 - matching work to pupils' needs so all are suitably challenged
 - checking pupils' understanding during lessons and modifying tasks if they are too easy or too hard
 - asking questions to assess pupils' understanding and challenge their thinking
 - rigorously applying the marking and feedback policy.
- Strengthen the impact of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that improvement planning identifies clear measurable outcomes of pupils' learning with checks set at regular intervals to monitor success
 - checking closely that policies to promote health, safety and welfare are rigorously applied, recorded and monitored
 - developing work across the federation to improve provision and outcomes, ensuring that leadership is shared equitably.
- Strengthen leadership and improve provision and outcomes in the Early Years

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Foundation Stage by:

- ensuring all adults have a good understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage
- using assessment to plan work that is well matched to the needs of the children in all six areas of learning, both indoors and outside.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils' work and school data confirms that most pupils make at least satisfactory progress from their starting points. However, there is variation between classes and subjects. For example, pupils' progress in an English lesson was limited because the tasks were not matched well enough to pupils' abilities and did not provide enough opportunities to extend their learning. In addition, checks were not made often enough to see how well they were doing in order to modify plans. In contrast, in a lesson in Year 6, pupils made outstanding progress in their ability to use descriptive language in writing. They were enthralled by an inspirational film and the atmosphere created by the teacher in this well-structured lesson. Detailed planning was supplemented by the teacher circulating throughout the lesson, asking carefully-differentiated questions to check individuals understanding, provide support and additional challenge. Pupils were proud to share their work, suggest improvements and challenge themselves to do even better. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to their peers in lessons. Additional intervention programmes or carefully planned individual support to quicken the progress these pupils make are increasingly resulting in accelerated progress. Where gaps have been identified in the performance of groups, or within basic skills, there are promising signs that these are narrowing. A relevant example is the more carefully planned ability groupings for teaching reading skills in Key Stage 1.

Pupils' enjoyment of learning is evident in their above average levels of attendance and the way they maintain interest in activities. They talk convincingly about keeping safe; for example, they know about road safety and how to stay safe on the internet. They understand how to lead a healthy lifestyle. Pupils are particularly enthusiastic about the sports on offer and those who excel take on the role of sports advocates willingly. Pupils of all ages accept a wide range of responsibilities which helps the school to run smoothly. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They show empathy, respect and consideration for others; for example, they say that they would not tolerate racism; they raise money for charity and perform for members of the local community. Pupils also raise chickens and sell eggs locally. They enter into debates, for example, about whether graffiti is a good or bad thing. Pupils behave well and occasionally display exemplary behaviour and manners around the school. Pupils' ability to apply their satisfactory basic and good personal skills ensures they are prepared suitably for the next stage of their education and future lives.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 3 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attainment ¹ | 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 |
| 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 | 3 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attendance ¹ | 2 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |

How effective is the provision?

Teachers promote positive relationships with pupils, who respond with good attitudes to learning. Lesson planning is usually linked to accurate assessments of pupils' learning and work is usually adapted to meet pupils' needs. This is not consistently the case. For example, pupils of different abilities are sometimes given the same task and the more-able occasionally complete the same tasks as others before going on to complete a more challenging task. Pupils who find learning difficult are also given the same task but with additional adult support. In a mathematics lesson using decimals in Years 4 and 5, the class teacher directed carefully-chosen and well-directed questions. As a result of the pupils' responses, he seized the opportunity to challenge the more-able pupils to solve even more complex problems. However, not all teachers check pupils' understanding often enough during lessons to enable them to clear up any misunderstandings or challenge pupils with open ended or problem-solving activities. Pupils say that the targets they are given help them to improve their work. A few good examples of the successful application of the marking and feedback policy indicate clearly to pupils their next steps. However, this good practice is not applied consistently throughout the school.

The curriculum has been redesigned and introduced this term. It rightly focuses on promoting the progression of pupils' knowledge and skills. More opportunities are being offered for pupils to practise reading, writing and to solve complex problems in mathematics in different contexts across the curriculum. In many classes, there is an improved emphasis on pupils being able to talk about their work. New schemes for

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

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teaching English and mathematics have been introduced and, whilst there are early signs that these are paying dividends in some classes, their impact has yet to be monitored across the school. There is a good range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities, including the creative arts and sports. First-hand experiences are offered through educational visits and visitors to school. Partnerships with the local secondary school and other agencies allow pupils a good range of opportunities which otherwise would not be available to them, for example, in art and design, technology and sports.

Care and welfare are satisfactorily promoted and parents and carers say that they are particularly appreciative of the school’s friendly and caring atmosphere. Pupils say there is always someone to turn to if they have any worries or concerns and that they feel well cared for and safe. Suitable support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities ensures that these pupils make at least satisfactory progress. The most vulnerable are cared for well, often in strong partnerships with a range of other agencies, so that these pupils achieve successfully. Day-to-day practice in care and welfare is satisfactory in all respects. However, the school does not always record and check on the required policies and procedures for welfare provision often enough.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has set about raising expectations and focusing everyone on the drive for improvement determinedly. She has brought rigour to the collection and analysis of information about how well pupils are doing. This has ensured that the quality of teaching has improved. Though teaching it is still not consistent, there is a clear picture of where teaching is less effective, where to focus additional interventions and set more challenging targets for pupils’ attainment. Because leaders are now secure in assessing the performance of different groups of pupils this is ensuring that where there is potential underperformance, it is addressed promptly to promote equal opportunity for all and eliminate any discrimination.

Because systems of self-evaluation have strengthened, the governing body has an accurate picture of the school’s strengths and weaknesses. This better understanding enables them to be more meaningfully involved in setting the strategic direction of the school and ensuring that statutory responsibilities, including safeguarding, are met suitably. Policies and procedures for safeguarding meet requirements. Staff are

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suitably trained and arrangements for the recruiting and vetting of staff and volunteers are satisfactory. Members of the governing body are ardent supporters of the school and make an important contribution. They provide much help and support around school and ensure that the school provides satisfactory value for money but they do not hold the school sufficiently to account for its shortcomings. For example, action planning for improvement does not make clear enough the intended outcomes for pupils in a way which can be measured and monitored easily and regularly. There are a few areas where the school has failed to record that aspects of policy, procedure and practice have been carried out.

School leaders have carried out the necessary audit and action planning as part of its work to promote community cohesion. Work within the school and the local community promotes community cohesion well. However, leaders have rightly identified that the school does not engage effectively with national and global community partners and it does not evaluate rigorously the impact of its work.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the setting with skills, knowledge and abilities that are typical for their age. They make satisfactory progress so that attainment is average in most areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. Their knowledge and understanding of the world and early literacy and skills with number are relatively weaker. The environment indoors and outdoors has been transformed for the better and, as a consequence, children are given more opportunities to explore and solve problems for themselves. However, there are still not enough of these opportunities as children sometimes spend too long as a whole class waiting to take their turn or to be directed to their next task by an adult. Children make good progress when working

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with adults who intervene appropriately and encourage them to think, and then stand back to let them solve problems for themselves. However, at times all adults are so engrossed in the task that they are directing that no one checks on the children who have initiated their own activities. This means that opportunities are lost to intervene and move their learning on.

Detailed information is collected conscientiously about children’s achievement. However, assessment information is not used consistently enough to plan activities to meet the needs of the children in all areas of learning equally. Children are encouraged to be active and have hands-on opportunities indoors and outdoors but their independence is not promoted effectively enough. The behaviour of most children is satisfactory. They are happy to come to the setting, make friends and enjoy everything that it has to offer. Others take a little time to settle because adults are not always consistent and systematic in establishing routines and expectations.

Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is in transition. Staff have worked hard to transform the environment and have responded positively to the support they have received from the local authority. However, not all staff are secure and confident in their knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements and this slows their ability to drive improvements.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Views of parents and carers

A higher proportion of parents and carers than is usual responded to the questionnaire. Of those who responded, the very large majority are happy with their children’s experience of school. Some wrote to positively praise the improvements that have been made. The response of one person, which was typical of many, was: ‘The school has improved greatly over the last two years. The children love coming’.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Saint Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Stamford 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 52 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 132 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 24 | 46 | 26 | 50 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 30 | 58 | 20 | 38 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child’s progress | 14 | 27 | 33 | 63 | 4 | 8 | 1 | 2 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 12 | 23 | 32 | 62 | 7 | 13 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 17 | 33 | 33 | 63 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child’s learning | 16 | 31 | 27 | 52 | 8 | 15 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 18 | 35 | 31 | 60 | 3 | 6 | 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) | 12 | 23 | 33 | 63 | 4 | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child’s particular needs | 17 | 33 | 29 | 56 | 5 | 10 | 1 | 2 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 21 | 40 | 22 | 42 | 6 | 12 | 1 | 2 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 16 | 31 | 30 | 58 | 4 | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 23 | 44 | 27 | 52 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school | 21 | 40 | 26 | 50 | 3 | 6 | 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 | 43 | 47 | 10 | 0 |
| Primary schools | 6 | 46 | 42 | 6 |
| Secondary schools | 14 | 36 | 41 | 9 |
| Sixth forms | 15 | 42 | 41 | 3 |
| Special schools | 30 | 48 | 19 | 3 |
| Pupil referral units | 14 | 50 | 31 | 5 |
| All schools | 10 | 44 | 39 | 6 |

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 08 April 2011 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.



6 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Saint Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Stamford PE9 1SR

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we came to inspect your school recently. I also wish to thank those of you who took time to talk with us and tell us about your school. Thanks also to those of you who completed the questionnaire.

These are some of the things we found out about your school.

- Your school is satisfactory. You make satisfactory, and occasionally, good progress and attain the standards expected. A few of you exceed them.
- You behave well in school, say you feel safe and know how to stay healthy.
- The teaching you receive and the way your school is led and managed are both satisfactory.

We are asking your headteacher, staff and governing body to do four things.

- We want them to make sure that all of you attain above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. We also want all of the teachers to use the exciting new curriculum they have planned equally well. You can help yourselves by learning the sounds that letters make, reading often and writing longer pieces of work. We also want you to have more opportunities to solve problems in mathematics.
- Our second challenge for your school is to ensure that teaching helps you make better progress. We want all of you to be challenged to work at your highest standard by careful planning of set work and with well-pitched questions that make you think. You can all help by doing the thinking needed to help your learning improve even more. We want marking and other feedback that you get from your teachers and other adults to tell you what to do next to improve.
- We want the school's leaders to quicken your rate of learning and progress and work together more closely with leaders at English Martyrs' Primary School.
- Finally, we want them to make sure that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage do as well as they can, as quickly as they can.

Thank you once again for being so friendly and polite. I wish you all every success in the future.

Yours sincerely
Joanne Harvey
Her Majesty's Inspector

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