

# St Bede's Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112369
<b>Local authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	378477
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 November 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Robert Pye

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>	199
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Carrick
<b>Headteacher</b>	Christina Battle
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	06 June 2007
<b>School address</b>	Strathclyde Avenue Carlisle CA2 7DS
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 14 lessons taught by nine teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils and the community police officer. They observed the school's work and looked at documents relating to safeguarding pupils. They looked at documents relating to pupils' progress and attainment, the curriculum, the school's development plan and the way in which the school evaluates its own performance. The views of parents and carers, through 48 returned questionnaires, were analysed and staff and pupil questionnaires were also scrutinised.

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

- Whether lessons are challenging to ensure good progress for all pupils, particularly in English and mathematics.
- How effectively the curriculum and use of assessment support teaching and learning in mathematics at Key Stage 2.
- The impact of school leadership in the management of teaching and learning.

## Information about the school

St Bede's is a broadly average-sized primary school. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and there are very few with English as an additional language. An above-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The school has a number of external awards, including Healthy School status and Sportsmark.

**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 Bede's is a good school. It provides a warm and friendly setting. The quality of care, guidance and support pupils receive, often on an individual basis from teachers and teaching assistants, is good and pupils respond very positively, with consistently good behaviour. Parents and carers pay tribute to what the school does for the children through comments such as, 'Staff are very caring and loving in their approach to the children.' This is supported by effective partnerships with outside agencies and institutions such as the Heathlands Farm.

Children's skills on entry to Reception are usually below those typical for children of this age. The good provision in Reception allows children to make good progress and they continue to do so throughout the school. As a result, attainment has risen to broadly average in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. There are, however, differences, with pupils' progress in mathematics not quite as good throughout the whole of Key Stage 2 as that in found in English.

Pupils feel safe and have a wide variety of responsibilities in school, as class secretaries and school councillors, for example. They make a good contribution to the school and wider community. Opportunities to enjoy singing and celebrate their achievements make a significant contribution to their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance is average because, although pupils enjoy coming to school, too much time is taken off by a small minority of families. The quality of teaching is mostly good, with warm relationships between pupils and adults. Assessment is used well, but, in a small minority of mathematics lessons, teaching is satisfactory because teachers rely too much on worksheets that do not match activities closely enough to pupils' abilities. The good curriculum provides varied opportunities for enrichment, leading to pupils' creative and personal development, within the curriculum and in the after-school clubs where activities greatly enhance pupils' learning experiences and all-round development. Pupils' confidence in using information and communication technology (ICT) is a strength.

Procedures to monitor and evaluate the work of the school are rigorous and, as a result, leaders and staff have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. The response to a dip in Key Stage 1 attainment last year has been quickly acted upon, with strategies that are already ensuring that these pupils are now making good progress. The school has, therefore, a good capacity to sustain improvement and provides good value for money.

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

- Increase pupils' progress and raise attainment in mathematics by:
  - making more effective use of assessment to match tasks more closely to pupils' individual learning needs, thus challenging them to achieve well
  - improving the quality of marking by regularly including developmental points that will help the pupils take the next steps in their learning.
- Improve attendance by seeking further ways to encourage the small minority of parents and carers whose children miss school too often, to support their children's education more closely.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2
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Pupils are enthusiastic learners. At the start of lessons, they keen to begin their activities. For example, having learnt about types of hat and having discussed which ones would be suitable for Christmas, Year 3 pupils could not wait to design their own. Pupils behave well, enjoy their activities and support each other willingly in their learning. Attainment is now consistently average by the end of Year 6. Progress across the school is, therefore, good and pupils of all groups are achieving well from their starting points. As a result of targeted support from a well-trained team of teaching assistants, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same good progress as that of their peers. Moreover, pupils with English as an additional language are progressing exceptionally well from their starting points. Pupils feel safe and comment, 'Our teachers keep us safe and will always help us.' Their contribution to the wider community is good. They take part in many activities within the city, such as singing and in a wide variety of sporting competitions. Older pupils look after younger ones on a regular basis and pupils in all classes take their fundraising very seriously indeed. Pupils talk accurately and confidently about how to lead a healthy lifestyle. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils reflect deeply and thoughtfully on their feelings and show joy during communal singing. The school has a strict attendance policy yet despite the school's continued and strenuous efforts, a small minority of pupils miss too many lessons during term time. With average attainment, pupils are satisfactorily placed for their future well-being.

### *These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</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

<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</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>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

In the better lessons, teachers' questioning develops pupils' understanding and teachers have high expectations of what their pupils can do. In a Year 5 English lesson, for example, the teacher skilfully modelled reading and allowed pupils to discuss possible responses and feelings. As a result, they were able to adopt a character to record events in a diary. In all lessons, there is sensitive support from teaching assistants. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included in discussions. In a small minority of mathematics lessons, assessment is not used effectively enough, because teachers rely too much on commercial worksheet-based plans that are not flexible enough to meet pupils' needs. As a result, the pace of learning slows. Assessment in most lessons supports good progress by identifying the next steps in learning. The quality of marking is good in English but more variable in mathematics.

The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' personal and academic development. ICT is used very effectively to support a wide range of learning opportunities. There are frequent opportunities for pupils to participate in enrichment and extra-curricular activities, including visits. Pupils speak positively of the variety of after-school clubs, which are well-attended.

A creative curriculum is successfully being introduced for the younger pupils, allowing greater opportunities for continued, first-hand learning experiences.

Pastoral care for pupils is at the forefront of all staff actions, including the good team of talented teaching assistants. They are concerned to ensure that individual pupils can access everything the school has to offer. Induction and transition procedures are regarded highly by pupils, parents and carers and the school's well-developed partnerships with outside agencies and local secondary schools ensure that those in Year 6 are well-prepared for entry into secondary education.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior leadership team are fully committed to the continuous development of provision. They identify the school's strengths and areas for development accurately. The leadership team has managed the quality of teaching effectively and has successfully co-ordinated good provision to amend the dip in attainment at the end of Key Stage 1. Staff share their ambitions and have worked hard to improve many aspects of the school's work and sustain the overall good outcomes achieved by pupils. Parents and carers have a high level of confidence in the school's leaders. The governing body makes a satisfactory contribution to the work and direction because they are not fully systematic in their monitoring role.

The school promotes parental partnerships effectively and in a variety of ways. For example, it provides workshops designed to improve learning at home. It has forged productive partnerships with a range of external institutions that make a good contribution to pupils' learning. For example, the community police regularly visit school to raise pupils' awareness of personal safety. Procedures to safeguard pupils are good and can be seen in practice across all areas of the school. Appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and visitors and training in safeguarding and child protection is of good quality. Risk assessments and policies reflect the school's drive to give children a secure environment. The promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory.

There is a good commitment to ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils. For example, effective action to boost the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is having a positive impact, particularly in accelerating their progress in mathematics. The school is a cohesive and happy place where pupils feel safe, secure and valued as individuals.

*These are the grades for the leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</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>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children's skills on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage vary from year to year but are generally below expectations for their age and well below in their personal, social and emotional development. Following effective induction into their new

surroundings, they settle down quickly and are soon working and playing very well with their peers and engaging enthusiastically in all the activities. They continue to make good progress in most areas of learning and show high levels of curiosity about the world around them. They are very keen to tell adults what they are doing and learning.

Good teaching, strong support from teaching assistants and thoughtful use of resources, motivate children to be creative in their learning in the colourful indoor area. The outdoor spaces provide for all areas of the curriculum but they are rather small and opportunities to promote children's physical development are rather limited on occasions. Nonetheless, children have many opportunities to select their own games and the vibrant and exciting atmosphere reflects the trust and confidence they have in the adults who work with them.

Leadership and management are good and ensure that the welfare of each child is at the heart of everything the setting tries to do. Regular monitoring leads to an accurate evaluation of performance and continuous emphasis on providing the very best for each individual. There are strong links with a variety of outside agencies for the benefit of the children and also their parents and carers.

*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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

Almost all parents and carers who returned the questionnaires express the view that their children enjoy school and that the school keeps them safe. In addition, a very large majority is entirely happy with their children's experiences at the school. As some parents and carers commented, 'Our children have settled quickly at the school and have a very good time.' A few parents and carers feel that the school does not do enough to keep their children safe. Inspectors examined school data and policies and talked with children. They judge that children are safe at the school. A minority of parents and carers are concerned that the school does not listen to their views and concerns. Inspectors looked at the methods used by the school and found that staff make positive efforts to listen and respond to the views and concerns of parents and carers.

## 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 48 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 199 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	33	69	12	25	2	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	38	79	8	17	2	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	29	60	19	40	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	34	71	13	27	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	39	81	9	19	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	63	18	38	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	63	17	35	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)	30	63	13	27	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	31	65	14	29	2	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	52	20	42	1	2	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	27	56	19	40	2	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	35	73	10	21	2	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	77	9	19	2	4	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 is 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](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.**



9 November 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Bede's Catholic Primary School, Carlisle, CA2 7DS**

Thank you all for your warm welcome when the inspection team visited your school recently. You were very polite and kind to us. We are particularly grateful to those of you who came to talk to some of us on Monday lunchtime. We enjoyed your good behaviour and the way you support each other confidently in class.

St Bede's is a good school. You are right to be proud of it. You are making good progress in your lessons and most of you enjoy learning. By the time you leave school at the end of Year 6, the standards that you reach are broadly average. The adults who work with you care for and look after you extremely well. You look after younger children very well, too, and accept such a wide range of responsibilities to help run the school. You are not afraid to give visitors advice on how to keep safe or stay healthy!

Your headteacher and all the other staff are very proud of you and they are always looking for ways to make the school even better. We would like to help them with this, so we have asked your teachers to help you make even faster progress, by making sure that at all times your work matches your abilities in mathematics. We have asked the teachers to make sure that their marking and feedback help you to learn more quickly in mathematics lessons. We have also asked your school to find ways to help a small minority of you to attend more regularly.

Thank you again for your kindness to us. Please keep working hard and looking after each other.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Pye  
Lead inspector

