

# The Faber Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131984
<b>Local Authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	381431
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 November 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sarah Bentley

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	66
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Pennington
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alexandra Beardmore
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 December 2006
<b>School address</b>	Cotton Lane Cotton ST10 3DN
<b>Telephone number</b>	01538 702324
<b>Fax number</b>	01538 703715
<b>Email address</b>	office@faber.staffs.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors, who observed seven lessons taught by three teachers. They held meetings with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including a wide sample of pupils' books, teachers' planning documents, and tracking and assessment data. Questionnaires from 52 parents and carers, 41 pupils and eight staff were analysed.

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

- What is the evidence over time for good progress made by different groups of pupils from their starting points?
- Do teachers use data effectively to plan learning activities and experiences that are well matched to pupils' abilities and learning needs?
- How well is the school improving provision in mathematics?
- Are monitoring and evaluation procedures rigorous and can leaders show clear evidence of impact on raising attainment across the school?

## Information about the school

This small rural Catholic primary school takes some pupils from the local village but most from surrounding areas. There are currently three classes. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is just above average. The school has gained Healthy School's status and the Activemark award. The governing body has been part of a federation since January 2011 and supports the Faber Catholic primary school, five other local primary schools and a secondary school with a sixth form. The governing body is also responsible for a breakfast club on the school site.

**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

The Faber Catholic Primary is a good school. The headteacher provides a clear sense of purpose and direction which is clearly linked to well-identified school improvement priorities. The effective teamwork of all leaders and staff, together with the governing body, has ensured that teaching and learning and standards have improved. The school has a supportive atmosphere where pupils feel welcome and cared for. Parents and carers told inspectors that they value the family atmosphere at the school, with one saying, 'There is an ethos of valuing each child as an individual and a nurturing approach which encourages the children to thrive at Faber.'

Children make good progress in Reception from starting points that are often below expectations, especially in writing and language skills. In 2011 standards in Year 6 national tests were average overall and just above average in English. More-able pupils reached the higher levels in English because effective targeting has helped to keep pupils on track to attain the levels they are capable of. The performance of pupils is tracked very closely, with particular attention to the progress of those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Assessment procedures have improved since the previous inspection and there are good examples of marking that shows pupils what they need to do to improve. However, this is not the case in all subjects. Teaching is good and teachers have high expectations of what their pupils are capable of doing. However, opportunities are sometimes missed when pupils are not given enough time to write at length, or use their mathematical skills in other curriculum areas. Monitoring by the headteacher is good and sufficiently rigorous, providing teachers with clear feedback on how to improve. Monitoring by some subject leaders focuses too much on what the teacher is doing rather than its impact on pupils' learning and feedback to teachers is less focused. The school has a good track record of improvement and a good understanding of how well it is doing and what needs to be done next. Consequently it has a good capacity to improve.

Pupils' personal development is good and they have a good understanding of how to keep safe and be healthy. Parents and carers say their children enjoy coming to school and pupils agree. Pupils are well behaved and display positive attitudes to their learning. They work hard, and this has a positive effect on the progress they make in lessons. The curriculum ensures that pupils receive a good variety of exciting activities and experiences and is enriched by visits and visitors to school. Pupils enjoy the range of after-school activities and clubs. Good arrangements for care, guidance and support ensure that all pupils are able to develop confidence,

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regardless of their individual circumstances.

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

- Move the overall quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
  - increasing the number of opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills across the wider curriculum
  - checking that the school’s marking policy is applied in all subjects to give children clear guidance as to how well they have done and how they can improve their work.
  
- Sharpen the monitoring skills of subject leaders by:
  - ensuring monitoring focuses carefully on the impact of teaching on pupils’ learning and provides clear feedback to teachers.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 make good progress and levels of attainment are rising. By the end of Year 6 their attainment is average in mathematics, an improvement from previous years, and is above average in English with higher than average numbers of pupils attaining at a high level. This is because they receive consistently good teaching. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress because their needs are diagnosed early and specific plans are put in place to support them. Furthermore, they have specific intervention sessions to support their progress and to help them overcome their difficulties.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their above average attendance rates. Pupils pay close attention in lessons, demonstrate highly positive attitudes to learning and behave well. Good social skills are evident when pupils are discussing and cooperating together. For example, in Years 5 and 6 pupils were working together to discuss the circulatory system and explaining their understanding and working together. Pupils are well informed about the importance of eating healthily and taking regular exercise. They also make a good contribution to the school, local and wider community. Good basic skills in English, improving skills in mathematics combined with pupils’ good personal skills and good attendance, mean that they are well prepared for the future.

*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

<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

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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>
<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>2</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>

## How effective is the provision?

The school has improved how teachers use assessment information to plan pupils' work and also to set learning targets for those children who have not been making the levels of progress of which they are capable. Learning is tailored to meet pupils' needs and adjusted during lessons. Teachers use good questions and this draws out pupils' ideas and helps to develop their thinking skills meaning that all pupils, from the least to the most able, are challenged well. Teachers plan lessons with clear learning objectives and effective success criteria for pupils to assess their work against. The impact of this is that pupils are clear about their targets and know what they need to do to achieve them. Support by teaching assistants makes a good contribution to the quality of learning across the school. The whole-school assessment and tracking system provides the school with secure data on pupils' progress. As a result of regular pupil progress meetings, teachers have a good understanding of how well their pupils are doing and the action to be taken to support them effectively in order to reach their challenging longer-term targets and raise levels of attainment. Staff work effectively together and regularly take advantage of professional opportunities within the local federation to enhance their teaching skills.

The curriculum has changed and pupils told inspectors that this increases their motivation and engages their interest more. Different subjects are brought together in topic-based work that provides pupils with exciting opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. The curriculum supports pupils' health, safety and well-being very effectively.

The school cares deeply for its pupils. Arrangements for the care, guidance and support of all pupils are well organised, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, which contribute to their good development and well-being and supports their learning. Pupils' think their work is celebrated well. They were proud to show inspectors the 'working walls' in their classrooms. There is a range of high quality displays throughout the school which values and celebrates pupils' achievements.

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*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?**

Since she joined the school, the head teacher has clearly communicated to everyone her high expectations and has driven improvement ably supported by an enthusiastic, committed and well-motivated leadership team. Through a good range of partnerships, the school has successfully enhanced pupils’ learning and this has raised achievement. As a result of accurate monitoring and support by the headteacher, teaching has improved and strategic planning is founded on robust evidence and based on good quality data. The school conducts a cycle of monitoring activities to check on pupils’ learning and progress. However, subject leaders do not always focus sufficiently on the impact that teaching over time has on different groups of pupils or give teachers enough information about how to improve.

The federated governing body, which supports governance in other schools, fulfils its statutory duties well. It challenges the school to do well and supports and is influential in determining the school’s strategic direction. School leaders and governors have a clear understanding of safeguarding procedures and have good systems to ensure that pupils and staff are safe. Good practice is adopted across all aspects of safeguarding and internet safety forms a strong part of this. The school has positive relationships with parents and carers who were keen to talk to inspectors about the improvements they could see in their children’s achievements and well-being. Good attention is paid to promoting equality of opportunity. The school is pro-active in devising initiatives to overcome any weaknesses and tackling discrimination. A good audit of needs relating to community cohesion has enabled the school to draw up effective plans which promote its engagement with groups beyond the immediate community. The school makes good use of all its resources and provides good value for money.

*These are the grades for 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</b>	<b>2</b>

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<b>school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are happy, settled and confident because of the welcoming environment with well-established routines. They make good progress in all areas of their learning but especially in reading, writing and in linking letters and sounds. Children behave well and are enthusiastic in all that they do. For example, they thoroughly enjoyed recording their numbers on the whiteboard outside from their ‘add one more’ number game. Teaching is good and staff support children’s care and welfare extremely well so that the children develop extremely positive attitudes to learning and make a very good start at school. Adults provide a range of interesting learning activities, giving children some opportunities to work on things they choose themselves as well as to take part in more formal group-work activities. However, pupils do not always have sufficient opportunities to learn independently.

Parents and carers greatly value how closely staff work with them. The school does a great deal to encourage them to help their children’s learning at home. During the inspection, parents and carers commented on how quickly their children settled into school and how keen and enthused they were to read and write at such an early stage.

Leadership and management are good and self-evaluation is accurate. There are efficient systems in place for monitoring progress and evaluating the impact of provision. All staff work together as an effective team and contribute fully to current assessment systems.

*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



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## **Views of parents and carers**

There was a high response to the parental questionnaire and responses indicated clearly that parents and carers are very happy with the school and are pleased that their children enjoy school so much. All feel that the school helps them to support their children's progress. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers agreed with all the remaining statements and this view was supported by the findings of the inspection team.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Faber 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 52 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 64 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	28	54	24	46	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	71	14	27	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	26	50	24	46	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	56	21	40	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	30	58	20	38	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	29	56	23	44	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	60	20	38	1	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	25	48	22	42	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	28	54	20	38	2	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	38	26	50	4	8	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	48	22	42	3	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	27	52	21	40	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	32	62	18	35	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	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](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.**



21 November 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of The Faber Catholic Primary School, Cotton, ST10 3DN**

Thank you so much for the help you gave us when we visited your school. We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you, because you were really polite and open when telling us about your school and are proud of what you do. We were impressed by your good behaviour and how you keep yourselves fit and healthy. You told us that you thoroughly enjoy what the school offers you; you enjoy learning about lots of exciting things in the curriculum and more especially you like the 'wow' days linked to your topic work. You have a good understanding of why it is important to eat healthily and take regular exercise and you appreciate the good range of sporting activities you participate in.

Those who lead your school do so well and all adults take good care of you and keep you safe. We found that you are getting a good education and your school helps you to progress well. Your headteacher and all the teachers know what needs improving, and how to do it. We think that the school can get even better. We have asked school leaders to ensure you have opportunities to practise your English and mathematics skills in your topic work.

We hope you continue to do well and to enjoy learning and school as much as you do now.

I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Bentley  
Lead inspector

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