

Saint Edmund's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Unique reference number | 137426 |
| Local authority | Wiltshire |
| Inspection number | 386084 |
| Inspection dates | 9–10 May 2012 |
| Lead inspector | David Edwards HMI |

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

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|--|------------------------------------|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Non-maintained |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 197 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Marie Sawyer |
| Headteacher | Michael O'Keefe |
| Date of previous school inspection | 5 December 2006 |
| School address | Duncan Street Calne SN11 9BX |
| Telephone number | 01249 813821 |
| Fax number | 01249 822127 |
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Introduction

Inspection team

David Edwards

Her Majesty's Inspector

Charlotte Roberson

Additional inspector

This inspection was a pilot inspection carried out with one day's notice. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 13 lessons taught by nine teachers. In addition, discussions were held with two groups of pupils, the headteacher, the senior leaders, teachers and representatives from the governing body. The inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, and looked at information about pupils' performance, the school development plan, including minutes of meetings and reports, school policies, and curriculum planning documents. In addition, questionnaires were scrutinised from 101 parents and carers, 25 staff and 98 pupils.

Information about the school

This is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school and serves the town of Calne and the surrounding area. Most pupils are White British and speak English as their first language. A few are at the early stage of learning English. The proportions of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are below average. The school has a below-average proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. Pupils with speech, language and communication needs form the largest group with additional needs. Pupils are taught in single-age classes throughout the school. The school converted to academy status in September 2011. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out minimum requirements for pupils' attainment and progress.

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 | 1 |
| Achievement of pupils | 1 |
| Quality of teaching | 1 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | 1 |
| Leadership and management | 1 |

Key findings

- This is an outstanding school. It has maintained high standards in English and mathematics since the previous inspection and has successfully addressed areas identified for improvement. A strong Christian ethos permeates the work of the school, which promotes pupils' exceptional spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. Consequently, the teaching pupils receive throughout the school is consistently good and usually outstanding.
- Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Almost all sustain excellent progress in English and mathematics. They apply their developing skills, including reading, writing, communication, and mathematical understanding, to great effect across the curriculum.
- Pupils behave very well in lessons and show excellent attitudes to learning. They are tolerant, reflective and very caring towards to each other and respectful and courteous to staff and visitors. Pupils say they feel completely safe in school because of the very effective care and support they receive. Incidents of poor behaviour are rare and managed well. The school works closely with partner agencies to meet the needs of all pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable.
- Teaching is outstanding because teachers possess excellent subject knowledge. They plan astutely and set stimulating and challenging tasks based on their systematic and accurate assessment of pupils' learning needs. Teaching, usually, generates high levels of enthusiasm among pupils for learning.
- Leaders and managers, including the governing body, are united in their vision and lead by example. Their motivation is sustained through a commitment to the Christian Gospel, a shared sense of purpose, and a well-informed and accurate understanding of the school's performance. The quality of teaching is managed by senior leaders very carefully in order to sustain pupils' excellent learning and outcomes. Leaders are dedicated to further improvement and aware of the need to develop the outdoor learning environment, especially for the youngest children, in order to bring it in line with the very good indoor provision they enjoy. The school has excellent strategies for engaging regularly with parents and carers.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the outdoor learning environment throughout the school, especially for the youngest children, so that it better supports the curriculum and development needs of all pupils.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children make a strong start in the Early Years Foundation Stage as a result of high-quality care and good teaching. Most children begin school with knowledge and skill levels that are just below age-related expectations. However, due to the expertise of staff, children settle quickly to routines and make rapid progress in all areas of learning. Children's enthusiasm for learning is evident in the way they take turns and play cooperatively together in the well-resourced indoor learning environment. Parents and carers spoke positively in the inspection questionnaire responses about the excellent communication with the school and the regular opportunities to come into school to learn with their children. One response captured the findings of this inspection and reflected the comments of many parents: 'We are so pleased with the progress our child has made in Reception, especially in reading.'

Observations of pupils' learning in lessons and their work in books confirm that the school continues to ensure all pupils and groups make outstanding progress. Pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 in reading, writing, and mathematics has remained well above the national average since the previous inspection. Pupils continue to build on this high attainment throughout Key Stage 2, so that most attain highly in reading, writing, and mathematics by the end of Year 6. This success is due to the school's thorough knowledge of each pupil. The very careful monitoring of pupils' individual progress by senior leaders ensures teachers are provided with an accurate understanding of the skills pupils need to develop and the knowledge they need to acquire in order to maintain their excellent all-round progress. Consequently, all identified groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, are firmly on track to achieve their challenging end-of-year targets. Pupils are motivated to achieve highly in lessons. This was evident, for example, in a Year 6 English revision class, when pupils worked collaboratively on a reading task and could confidently identify and give examples of 'the passive voice' within the text.

Quality of teaching

Teaching, typically, encourages pupils to think for themselves. Teachers' questioning probes and supports learning so that pupils are very motivated, anticipate fun and excitement in lessons and go on to achieve highly. This is because teachers plan and work very closely with support staff to provide interesting lessons that cater

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extremely well for the needs of all, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Pupils say they appreciate the effort teachers put into planning their lessons. 'Teachers make lessons fun!' said one enthusiastic pupil. A Key Stage 1 pupil, when asked what an exclamation mark represented, replied 'It tells me there is something really exciting to learn!'

The regular and careful monitoring of pupils' individual progress provides teachers with reliable data which allow them to target interventions specifically at pupils who need them most, as well as to maintain an accurate picture of pupils' overall achievements. A focus on promoting pupils' spiritual, cultural, moral, and social development is woven seamlessly throughout the curriculum. The vast majority of parents' and carers' responses to the questionnaires indicate that they are pleased with the progress their children are making and acknowledge teachers' efforts to keep pupils 'motivated' and 'enthusiastic'.

Throughout the school teachers ensure the marking of pupils' books is supportive and provides them with guidance on how to improve their work. Inspectors found that, from an early age, pupils are guided regularly in what they need to do next to improve their work. As a result, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have acquired a range of strategies to help them reflect on and improve their work as well as take a growing responsibility for their learning. For example, pupils in a Year 5 class worked in teams using their well-developed computer and literacy skills to hone their presentations on the importance of recycling.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, adults are experienced and confident in the delivery of daily phonics sessions (linking letters with the sounds they make), which secure reading and writing skills. Children's enthusiasm to learn and their attitudes to learning are excellent. For example, one child in showing her work to an inspector said 'I use finger spaces because then my writing does not look like scribble. I love writing!' Indeed, children respond thoughtfully to teaching and maintain concentration on a wide range of activities that boost all areas of learning.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The behaviour of pupils in class and around the school is nearly always excellent. A scrutiny of behavioural records, discussions with staff, pupils, and responses by parents and carers in questionnaires show that this is also the case over time. The manifest and inclusive Christian ethos which permeates all aspects of the school makes a significant contribution to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. Pupils' growing sense of responsibility is promoted through regular assemblies and acts of worship. A whole-school assembly organised and managed by older pupils contained a variety of singing, drama, and a presentation using modern technology, prayers written by the pupils, and a reading from the Bible. Another distinctive feature which promotes excellent social and moral awareness is the role played by the oldest pupils as 'reading partners' for the youngest children. Not only do children effectively develop and practise their reading skills, but this commitment to supporting the youngest pupils also helps to cement

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the outstanding social skills demonstrated by the majority of older pupils.

The school works successfully with a family support worker and other agencies where necessary to support pupils whose circumstances or learning needs may make them vulnerable. The school enjoys the full confidence of staff, pupils and the vast majority of the parents and carers who reported in the inspection questionnaire responses that standards of behaviour are typically of a very high standard. They believe that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure their children are kept safe in school. For example, one satisfied parent wrote 'The school has excelled in meeting the needs of my children.' Similarly, pupils report that bullying, in any form, is rare and say that adults take any reported incidents very seriously. One pupil commented 'The best thing about this school is it makes us sociable.' Pupils also say they are well informed about what constitutes unsafe situations, for example having a good awareness of internet safety.

Adults work effectively together in the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure children settle very quickly to routines. Children enjoy a stimulating learning environment both indoors and outside which boosts their independence and confidence to learn and, by the end of the Reception Year, most children are happy to share and take turns. However, leaders are not complacent and are aware that the outdoor provision needs to be updated and expanded to match the high-quality learning environment found inside the school. Throughout the day all staff are vigilant in ensuring the safety and well-being of pupils and take every opportunity to support and reinforce expectations of good play and behaviour.

Leadership and management

The headteacher is held in high regard by all within the school. His dedication and inspirational leadership have successfully built up a cohesive team of highly committed professionals who are demonstrating the ability to sustain an outstanding learning experience for all pupils. The Christian Gospel is the motivation for all leaders and is central to the work of the school. Self-evaluation is accurate because the monitoring of the school's work, including the performance management of all staff, promotes a culture of searching analysis and self-challenge which enables leaders to devise exceptionally well-focused plans for further improvement.

The school is exceptionally vigilant in keeping records and so cares and provides very well for the safety of pupils. All adults are appropriately trained and updated regularly in the procedures for safeguarding pupils. An outstanding curriculum provides pupils with highly positive and memorable experiences which promote pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. Engaging displays of children's work are seen throughout the school. Many of these reflect the school's core Christian values and help to ensure pupils gain an outstanding spiritual, moral, social, and cultural experience. The school is active in the wider community and contributes, for example, through raising money for charities. The very secure track record of high academic performance and excellent provision, which has been sustained since the previous inspection, demonstrates that the school's capacity for

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further improvement is similarly secured.

The governing body plays a significant and high profile role in the life of the school. It knows the school well, carries out its responsibilities efficiently and rigorously holds the school to account. The school's commitment to equality is evident, for example, in the incisive actions taken to improve pupils' writing skills since the previous inspection. The vast majority of parents' and carers' responses to the inspection questionnaires confirm they hold the school in very high regard. A few parents and carers raised concerns regarding the detrimental behaviour of a few children and the negative impact this may have on the progress of other children. These were shared with the school and, where appropriate, are commented on in this report.

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 | 54 | 42 | 2 | 2 |
| Primary schools | 14 | 49 | 32 | 6 |
| Secondary schools | 20 | 39 | 34 | 7 |
| Special schools | 33 | 45 | 20 | 3 |
| Pupil referral units | 9 | 55 | 28 | 8 |
| All schools | 16 | 47 | 31 | 6 |

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment. |
| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Attendance: | the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance. |
| Behaviour: | how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement. |
| Floor standards: | the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures. |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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: | inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. |
| 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. |
| Safety: | how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning. |

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.



11 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Saint Edmund's Catholic Primary School, Calne SN11 9BX

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to inspect your school recently. In particular, thanks to those of you who completed the inspection questionnaire, shared your work and spoke with us about what you think about your school. It was all very helpful. We found your school to be outstanding! Here are some of the many very good things we saw.

Your headteacher and all the staff care very effectively for you and ensure you enjoy school because your teachers plan lessons that capture your interest and make you think. Children in the Reception class settle quickly to learning and make very good progress because adults help them to learn effectively even while they are playing. The school's special focus on Christian values ensures your attitude to learning is extremely positive. Also, your behaviour in lessons and around the school is nearly always excellent. We were particularly impressed with the way you look out for each other, especially at lunchtime, when you eat together in family groups. We were also impressed with how older pupils supported the youngest children in learning to read.

Your teachers put a lot of energy into ensuring they mark your work regularly and provide comments that help you to improve. This is another reason why so many of you, by the time you leave school at the end of Year 6, have reached very high standards in English and mathematics.

We walked around your school, inside and outside, and decided there is just one thing that we would like your headteacher to do that would help you benefit even more from the very good provision you enjoy. We have recommended that improvements are made to the outdoor learning environment, starting with the youngest pupils' outdoor area. In this way, you will be able to enjoy even more outstanding learning opportunities. We are sure you will have lots of ideas to contribute in making these improvements.

We wish you all well for your futures and in all that you do.

Yours sincerely

David Edwards

Her Majesty's Inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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