

# St Oswald's CofE Aided Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108711
<b>Local authority</b>	South Tyneside
<b>Inspection number</b>	395457
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 July 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Janet Bennett

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>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	219
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Beverley Tingle
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mike Falcus
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 June 2007
<b>School address</b>	St Oswald's Road Hebburn NE31 1HT
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## Introduction

### Inspection team

Janet Bennett  
Barbara Redhead

Additional inspector  
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 14 lessons or parts of lessons taught by nine teachers. Five of these were joint observations with senior leaders. Inspectors also observed a range of activities for small groups of pupils and the support provided by additional adults within and outside of lessons. In addition, discussions were held with pupils, members of the governing body and staff. Pupils' work in books was scrutinised in addition to documentation relating to pupils' achievement, safeguarding, and school monitoring. Account was taken of 141 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, as well as questionnaires from pupils and staff. Inspectors took account of the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection.

## Information about the school

St Oswald's is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average and most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus is above average whilst the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is low. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are accommodated in a Reception class. The school meets the current floor standards, which relate to the government's minimum standard for pupils' attainment and progress. Since the previous inspection, there have been a number of staff changes.

**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

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key Findings

- St Oswald's is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because there are some variations in teaching and some aspects of leadership need further development. The warm relationships, strong Christian ethos and care shown to pupils, contribute significantly to the school's welcoming family atmosphere and to the excellent promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Children make a good start to their learning in the Reception class, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. Pupils achieve well by the end of Year 6 to reach standards that are average and often higher, particularly in English. Historically, outcomes in this subject have been better than in mathematics but effective action taken by leaders is successfully narrowing this gap.
- Teaching is good. The interesting activities that teachers plan contribute significantly to pupils' enjoyment of school. Where teaching is most effective questioning is tailored well to pupils' differing learning needs and marking helps pupils to improve their work. These successful approaches are not used consistently by all teachers.
- Behaviour and attitudes to learning are outstanding. Pupils feel very safe and are consistently polite and courteous. The respect they show one another and their ability to work cooperatively in lessons contribute significantly to their learning.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and take appropriate action to secure further improvement. However, despite well organised performance-management systems and strong leadership of teaching, some variations in teaching remain. This is because monitoring has not been fully successful in extending the most successful practice to all classes. Insufficient use is made of assessment data from the end of Early Years Foundation Stage to inform school self-evaluation. The performing arts is an outstanding aspect of the curriculum.

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

- Increase the effectiveness of leaders by:
  - using monitoring to identify the aspects of teaching that have the greatest impact on learning and extend these approaches to all classes
  - making greater use of the outcomes of Early Years Foundation Stage assessment to inform school self-evaluation and planning for future improvements.
- Improve the quality of teaching to that of the best by:
  - ensuring that questioning is consistently matched closely to the learning needs of different groups of pupils and challenges them to think hard
  - ensuring pupils have opportunities to respond to marking in order to improve their work.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils enjoy their learning and are keen to take an active part in lessons. They listen attentively and try hard to do their best. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to learn together and in these situations pupils show respect for each other's views, and cooperate well so that time is used productively.

Almost all parents and carers who completed questionnaires confirmed they were pleased with the progress their child is making. The inspection confirms that pupils achieve well although rates of progress vary between classes. From starting points that are often below those typical for their age, particularly in language and communication, pupils make good progress and by the end of Key Stage 2 reach standards that are at least average and often higher particularly in English. In recent years outcomes in this subject have been better than in mathematics; however, professional development for teachers, well planned support for pupils and smaller teaching groups in upper Key Stage 2 have improved standards in this subject, particularly for the more-able pupils. Reading is taught well across the school. Pupils make good progress in this subject, reaching average standards by the end of Key Stage 1 and often exceeding those seen nationally by the end of Year 6.

Leaders track pupils' progress carefully and take effective action to support learning should any gaps in performance occur. This ensures that all groups of pupils achieve well, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. Although the gap between their performance and national averages has narrowed by the time children leave the Reception class their skills remain below those seen nationally, particularly in communication, language and literacy.

## Quality of teaching

Parents, carers and pupils commented favourably about the quality of teaching in school and this was borne out by the inspection evidence. Teaching is good overall, but there are some variations between classes.

Effective relationships between staff and pupils are a strong feature of teaching. Consequently, pupils are confident to articulate their views and contribute actively in lessons. Interesting tasks 'hook' pupils into learning and engage them well. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils were intrigued to listen to the comments they had recorded on their trip to the beach, which helped them to write a recount of the things they had done. Classroom routines are understood by pupils so time is used well in lessons and a positive climate for learning is maintained. Good use of additional adults and clear explanations ensure that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs contribute fully in lessons and make good progress in their learning. Where teaching is most effective activities are tailored precisely to the learning needs of differing groups of pupils and questioning is used effectively to challenge thinking. Although these approaches are used well by some teachers they are not consistently embedded in all classes. Pupils' work is regularly marked. When this contributes well to learning pupils are given opportunities to respond to the comments that staff make in order to improve their work, however all teachers do not maximise these opportunities.

High priority is given to the teaching of reading. Pupils get off to a good start through regular opportunities to learn about sounds and letters and to develop their love of books. These early skills are built upon effectively so that the oldest pupils in school enjoy reading for pleasure and apply their skills confidently in lessons.

Good use of space and sensitive support from adults ensures that learning through play is promoted well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children quickly grow in confidence and develop good social skills. During the inspection, a group of children worked effectively together to perform their own version of 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'. They recognised and utilised their respective skills and negotiated individual roles and responsibilities. The senior education practitioner contributes well to children's learning and works effectively with the class teacher to form a strong partnership. Together they maintain a good balance between activities led by adults and those that children initiate for themselves. However, the pace of learning slows in some activities when the size of the group is too large and therefore tasks are not matched consistently well to the differing needs of children.

## Behaviour and safety of pupils

Parents, carers and pupils are highly positive about the standard of behaviour in school. Pupils' excellent behaviour contributes significantly to the calm and welcoming climate that exists across the school. Adults provide strong role models and, as a result, pupils are consistently polite in their interactions with staff and visitors, and show respect and courtesy to one another. Pupils are highly adept at managing their own behaviour but on the rare occasions when individual help is needed staff take sensitive and well planned action to bring about rapid improvements.

Parents and carers greatly appreciate the care that staff provide and are right to be confident that the arrangements in place to safeguard their children are very effective. Pupils say that they feel very safe in school because they have trusted adults that they can

turn to for help if it is needed. Pupils are confident that the very rare incidents of poor behaviour are dealt with swiftly by staff. Records confirm that incidents of bullying are extremely rare.

Pupils are enthusiastic learners who take full advantage of the wide range of activities on offer. They are keen to rise to the challenges that teachers set them and participate enthusiastically in the many opportunities they are given to take part in sports, performances and community events. For example, during the inspection pupils talked excitedly about their contribution to the 'Catherine Cookson' parade, and demonstrated impressive skills as team members in a game of wheelchair basketball. They are keen to continue their learning at home by accessing computer-based homework, and have an excellent understanding of securing their own safety, especially when using the internet.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher provides clear direction for the work of the school. He is well supported by a team of staff who share his vision and who work collectively to provide high levels of care for all pupils. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated in this highly inclusive school where parents value the family ethos and have the highest levels of trust in staff to keep their children safe.

Through well planned monitoring activities leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. Data from assessments carried out in Key Stages 1 and 2 are used effectively to inform school-improvement planning, but the use made of outcomes from the Early Years Foundation Stage is less well developed. Thoughtfully planned action has been successful in bringing about improvements in the teaching of mathematics through a range of professional development activities including opportunities for teachers to observe each other at work. The positive impact of these actions is evident in the improving standards in this subject. Leaders use their observations effectively to help individual teachers to improve their practice but they have not been fully successful in ensuring that the most effective practice of some teachers is extended to all classes. Nevertheless, these well established processes ensure that the school is well placed to build further upon its successes.

Leaders work very effectively with other professional services to ensure that pupils and families in need of specialist support receive the help they need. Tracking information is used well to identify those pupils needing extra help with their learning and well planned intervention and effective support in lessons ensures that pupils get back on track to meet the targets set for them. The special educational needs coordinator makes a strong contribution to this aspect of the school's work. As a result of these actions all pupils achieve well over time and pupils' attendance has improved to above the national average.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets pupils' needs well. It is strongly underpinned by Christian values and makes an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Strong links between literacy and other subjects engage pupils in meaningful and purposeful work which has a particularly positive impact on pupils' writing. Performance through music, dance and drama is an outstanding aspect of the school's work making a strong contribution to pupils' confidence and communication skills, and providing imaginative opportunities for community partnerships to blossom.

Governors give high priority to safeguarding pupils and ensure that current requirements are met. Promoting equal opportunities is an integral aspect of governors' decision-making and judicious use of financial resources ensures that all pupils benefit from the resources available to the school.



## 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](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.

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.**



6 July 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of St Oswald's CofE Aided Primary School, Hebburn, NE31 1HT**

Thank you for the warm welcome that you gave to us when we inspected your school. We were particularly impressed by your excellent behaviour. You told us how much you enjoy school because of the care you receive and the interesting things that your teachers plan for you to do. Mrs Redhead enjoyed sitting in on your rehearsal for 'Bugsy Malone'. We are sure this will be a great success.

Your school is good. These are some of the things that make it successful.

- Teachers plan lessons that help you to make good progress in your learning.
- The respect you show one another and your ability to work co-operatively in lessons help you to learn well together.
- The care that you receive from staff helps the youngest children to quickly grow in confidence and makes you feel very safe in school.
- The action taken by your headteacher and the people who work with him that ensures your school gets better and better all the time.

In order to improve your school further we have asked that:

- you are given time to respond to the comments teachers make when they mark your work
- teachers use questions to make all of you think really hard in lessons
- the successful approaches used by some teachers to help your learning are extended to all classes.

We were pleased to find that you attend school regularly. This is so important. Keep up the good work! We hope that you continue to enjoy school, to work hard, and to achieve well. We wish you great success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Janet Bennett  
Lead inspector

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