

St Edmund's Catholic Primary School

Rosebery Street, Springhill, Birmingham, B18 7PA

Inspection dates 18–19 September 2012

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| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Satisfactory | 3 |
| | This inspection: | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Quality of teaching | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Although teaching is rapidly getting better, too much still requires improvement before achievement can be consistently good.
- Lessons do not always maintain a lively pace, and the work set is sometimes too hard or too easy.
- Teachers do not always show pupils exactly how to improve their work.
- The information and communication technology equipment is not of sufficient quality to promote pupils' technical skills, or their use in other subjects.

The school has the following strengths

- Good leadership and management have greatly improved teaching, achievement, behaviour and attendance.
- Children in Nursery and Reception make good progress.
- Attainment rose throughout the school last year because pupils made much better progress.
- Pupils behave well, feel safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe.
- Pupils relate well to each other and staff, and enjoy learning.
- Sharing facilities with another local school has had a positive impact on teaching and learning.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is particularly strong.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed substantial parts of 10 lessons, and made a similar number of shorter visits to lessons across the school. Several younger pupils were heard reading.
- Discussions were organised with groups of pupils, members of staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and representatives of the local authority. Informal conversations were held with pupils, parents and carers.
- No information was available from the online questionnaire (Parent View), but the team took account of responses to the school's own questionnaire for parents and carers.
- Inspectors examined samples of pupils' work, including examples saved from last year. They scrutinised a variety of documentation, particularly that related to pupils' progress and ensuring their safety.

Inspection team

Steven Hill, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Steven Cartlidge

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is broadly average in size for a primary school.
- Pupils come from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds, with Black Caribbean and Black African pupils being the largest groups. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- Since the last inspection, the school has formed a federation with another nearby Catholic primary school. The two schools share the same headteacher and governing body. The deputy headteacher at St Edmund's acts as head of school when the headteacher is working in the partner school.
- The school provides full-time education for children of Reception age, in a unit shared with Nursery-aged children. Nursery children have full- or part-time provision. During the inspection no Nursery children were present, as staff were making home visits as part of the phased introduction of these children to school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is extremely high, at over 60%. Over the last few years, the proportion of pupils joining or leaving partway through their primary school education has been high.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported at school action, at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs, is high at about double the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment.
- The school provides a breakfast and after-school club for its own pupils.
- The instability in school staffing that predated the last inspection has now been eradicated as the school achieved a fully permanent staff from September 2011.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and improve progress through making teaching more consistently good, especially by ensuring that:
 - tasks are always appropriate to pupils' different needs, so they do not get work that is too easy or too hard for them
 - a good pace is maintained throughout lessons
 - marking always shows pupils how they can improve their work
 - pupils have time to follow up their teachers' suggestions, and do so.
- Improve the quality of equipment for information and communication technology, so that pupils have better opportunities to learn skills and to apply them to their work in other subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement has improved, particularly in the last year. The pupils who left Year 6 in 2012 had made progress in line with national averages since leaving Key Stage 1. They made much of their progress during Year 6, overcoming some much weaker achievement earlier in the key stage. Their progress was a vast improvement on that of the previous year's pupils, whose progress in Key Stage 2 had been weak.
- Across the rest of the school, progress is improving, but remains patchy between different year groups in different subjects. This is because the quality of teaching, although improving, is still too variable.
- Attainment has risen in all classes because of better teaching, although the extent of the improvement is mixed. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is broadly average in mathematics but below average in English. This is because pupils generally had lower starting points in English than in mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well. Support staff provide them with a good mix of help and challenge, and work is often modified to be tightly matched to their specific needs.
- The different ethnic groups in the school make similar progress to each other, with no significant differences in their achievement. The progress of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is similar to that of their classmates.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language are given specific support to help them learn English, so soon become fluent and make the same progress as other pupils. Similarly, the positive, welcoming ethos of the school, combined with specific help in their home language when appropriate, means that pupils who join the school at different times make the same progress.
- Children typically start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of skills and understanding that are well below those expected for their age, and achieve well so their attainment is much closer to expectations by the end of Reception.
- An increased emphasis on how letters in words represent sounds is raising standards in reading and writing from Nursery onwards.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- More teaching is good than previously, and inadequate teaching has been eliminated. This is the main reason why achievement has risen. However, too many lessons still have aspects that require improvement for teaching to be good overall.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour, and make these clear. The good relationships and mutual respect between pupils and adults mean that pupils are keen to please their teachers by working diligently and behaving well in class.
- In many lessons, teachers successfully prepare different work for pupils who are working at different levels, making good use of the school's rigorous assessment systems. At times, however, the match of tasks to ability is not tight enough, so that some pupils get work that is too hard for them, or others are not sufficiently challenged. This slows progress for these pupils.

- Many lessons have a good pace of learning, but in others the pace slows for many pupils. This can be for a variety of reasons, for example when too long is spent giving pupils instructions or moving from one part of the lesson to another. At other times, the teacher's commendable desire to provide pupils with extra information means that they are continually interrupted and cannot settle for long enough at their tasks.
- Teachers explain ideas well to pupils and often make good use of interactive whiteboards to clarify things or to hold pupils' attention. For example, they successfully show pupils how to use different aspects of information and communication technology (ICT) themselves on screen.
- Pupils' own opportunities to use ICT are limited because the lack of reliable equipment, even in the computer suite, makes teaching inefficient. Not all the class can access the computers together to practise what they have learnt. In addition, the lack of access to equipment in class means it is very difficult for teachers to routinely use pupils' ICT skills to enhance learning in other subjects.
- Teachers make good use of the skilled extra adults to support pupils who have specific educational or emotional needs. This ensures that such pupils are fully involved in lessons and, along with tasks tailored to their specific needs, underpins the good progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Although there is some excellent practice in the marking of pupils' work, too often it does not show pupils clearly enough how to improve. When pupils are given pointers to help them move on, or given extra examples to complete, this advice is not always followed, or chased up by the teacher in subsequent work.
- Adults frequently monitor pupils' ongoing progress so they can quickly identify and address any misconceptions and challenge pupils to improve. Occasionally, this is not done sufficiently well, and a few pupils become confused and so do not make enough progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy school and are keen to learn. They concentrate well in lessons and take a pride in their success, and this contributes to improving progress. Their enjoyment of school is reflected in their good attendance, with a significant drop in persistent absence last year.
- Relationships are good and pupils from a wide range of backgrounds work and play happily together. They are developing good collaborative skills, often working together effectively in groups, or sharing ideas in pairs.
- Pupils are developing good levels of independence, and work conscientiously without close supervision. For example, Year 5 pupils made good progress in writing answers to difficult questions about a story, as their teacher worked with a small group. They persevered in the face of problems and confidently used the context of the story to work out the meanings of unknown words or phrases.
- Behaviour is good in the playground and pupils confidently report that behaviour improved considerably over the last year. Behaviour observed in assembly was exemplary, as pupils listened intently to the teacher. Their strong spiritual and moral development was evident as they reflected thoughtfully about complex ideas.
- The school is very successful in helping pupils who initially find it hard to conform to improve their behaviour and self-confidence, and then to improve their learning. A variety of initiatives

supports this, making good use of internal and external expertise. The learning mentor plays a major part in helping these pupils.

- Pupils feel safe in school and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They have learnt about different kinds of bullying and say that it is infrequent in the school, and always dealt with well by the adults. They are adamant that any of the adults would support them if they were worried, and they would be confident in asking for help.

The leadership and management are good

- Extremely clear leadership and high expectations from the headteacher and her deputy headteacher have produced a common approach and vision in staff, based on raising achievement for all pupils. Their efforts have come to full fruition over the last year, and have been instrumental in ensuring that a more stable staff have raised their performance and that of the pupils. Middle leaders now play a full part in supporting and challenging their colleagues.
- Regular monitoring of lessons and clear feedback to teachers have helped them to improve their practice, and successfully eliminated inadequate teaching. Rigorous analysis and tracking of pupils' progress have been used to identify those falling behind, to provide suitable support and to hold staff to account for the progress of their classes.
- The school sets thorough and effective improvement targets for staff. These are clearly linked to teachers' individual performance as well as school priorities, and extra training and support are provided to help teachers meet their targets. Good use has been made of specialist expertise from the partner school to contribute to improvements. All of these features are helping to reduce inconsistencies in teaching and achievement.
- Resources are managed well, and staff are deployed very effectively to maximise their impact. This is particularly true of the use of support staff to drive up the progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and to help those who struggle with maintaining good behaviour. However, the current provision of reliable ICT equipment is inadequate.
- In the last year, improved support from the local authority has been effective in helping staff improve their practice. The federation has made a very positive impact on both achievement and teaching, particularly through the sharing of expertise, the joint moderation of pupils' work, and a shared approach to managing behaviour.
- The school is successful in ensuring that discrimination is eliminated, and that equal opportunities are provided for all. For example, the pupil premium is used effectively to ensure that all pupils are involved in every aspect of school life, regardless of their circumstances. The provision of extra, specific adult help to pupils who have problems has been successful in raising standards and narrowing the gap between the progress of different groups.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - ensures that safeguarding practices and procedures meet national requirements
 - provides an increasingly effective level of challenge and support, as the relatively new joint governing body gets to grips with understanding the two schools.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| Grade | Judgement | Description |
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 2 | Good | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |

School details

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| Unique reference number | 103440 |
| Local authority | Birmingham |
| Inspection number | 400360 |

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 | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 222 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Theresa Paszkowski |
| Headteacher | Mary O'Friel |
| Date of previous school inspection | 23 March 2010 |
| Telephone number | 0121 5237274 |
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