



St Edward's Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 103447
LEA Birmingham
Inspection number 276923
Inspection dates 24 May 2006 to 25 May 2006
Reporting inspector Paul Edwards AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Greenland Road Selly Park Birmingham, West Midlands B29 7PN
School category	Voluntary aided	Telephone number	0121 4641730
Age range of pupils	4 to 11	Fax number	0121 4645058
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Chair of governors	
Number on roll	368	Headteacher	Mr Tim Hughes
Appropriate authority	The governing body		
Date of previous inspection	15 January 2001		

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 24 May 2006 - 25 May 2006	Inspection number 276923
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Edward's is a large Catholic primary school with younger pupils occupying an older Victorian building and the juniors a newer building, approximately half a mile away. Pupils enter the school with skills that are broadly average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below average. Just under half of the pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and a small number of these are at an early stage of learning English.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school provides a good standard of education for its pupils and gives good value for money. Its own judgement of its effectiveness is accurate in most respects although it underestimates its provision for the pupils' personal development. Issues identified in the previous report have been addressed well and the school demonstrates a good capacity for further improvement.

The outstanding provision for the pupils' personal development, which begins in the Reception classes, continues throughout the school. The children are provided with a good start to their education in the Reception classes and most achieve the goals expected for their age. Overall, pupils, including those with learning difficulties, achieve well. By the end of Year 6, standards are well above average in English and above average in mathematics. Standards could be higher in mathematics. Not all teachers make the best use of assessment information in this subject to avoid pupils repeating work unnecessarily. However, overall, teaching is good because teachers plan interesting and exciting lessons that encourage most pupils to do their best. Good support for those pupils at an early stage of learning English as an additional language enables them to make rapid progress in learning English.

Leadership and management are good. Whilst correctly striving to maintain the very good standards in English, the school has accurately identified the causes of lower standards in mathematics and has introduced strategies that are improving the pupils' achievement in this subject.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards further in mathematics in Years 3 to 6.
- Ensure teachers make more effective use of assessment information, particularly in mathematics, to match work more closely to pupils' prior attainment.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The pupils' achievement is good and standards are above average. Those pupils who are learning English as an additional language are provided with good support, enabling them to make rapid progress in their acquisition of English.

Children enter the Reception classes with skills that are broadly similar to those expected for their age. They make good progress and by the time they enter Year 1 standards are above average. Most reach the goals expected of them with a significant minority exceeding them. There is a strong emphasis on developing the pupils' basic skills, and these develop well as the pupils move through the school. Speaking and listening skills are particularly strong. Reading and writing skills are also well above average by the end of Year 6. Over the last two years the pupils in Years 3 to 6 have not achieved as well in mathematics as they have in English. Much improved assessment procedures and more effective use of staff are enabling this issue to be addressed

with considerable success, and standards in mathematics are now above average by the end of Year 6. There is still a little way to go to ensure all pupils are challenged sufficiently. The very challenging targets set for 2005 were met in English but fewer pupils than expected attained the higher level in mathematics. The pupils currently in Year 6 are well on course to attain the challenging target set this year.

Pupils with learning difficulties are provided with very effective support, ensuring that they too make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils are extremely positive about all that the school has to offer. They value their teachers particularly, saying that 'teachers are really nice' and 'are always explaining'. Pupils enjoy coming to school, and attendance and punctuality are good.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. This is as a consequence of the school's commitment to 'building a school community on the foundation of Jesus Christ'. Pupils are developing as well rounded citizens with a clear sense of right and wrong and the capacity to reflect on life's joys and challenges. They get on very well with each other. They collaborate well in lessons and play together happily at playtimes. Behaviour is excellent. Pupils respond very well to the staff's high expectations of hard work and are generally extremely sensible. They have a very good understanding of the different cultural traditions represented in the school population.

Pupils know how to stay healthy and safe. They make an outstanding contribution to the school and wider community through initiatives like the work of the school council and fund raising for charities. They are developing good skills to help them in later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are consistently good throughout the school and very strong in Year 6. This underpins pupils' good achievement. There are some common strengths in the teaching. These include thorough planning and preparation, with work adapted to suit the needs of different learners. Pupils with learning difficulties are supported well and tackle their work confidently. Good teaching and support for pupils learning English as an additional language enable them to make rapid progress. High expectations of hard work and good behaviour are also evident in all classes. Teachers explain new ideas very carefully and clearly, so that pupils quickly grasp new concepts. Pupils are encouraged to use their initiative. This was particularly evident in the Reception classes where a small group worked well together to act out the Hansel and Gretel story.

Teachers keep a careful check on pupils' progress and help pupils to understand what they need to do to improve. Marking of pupils' written work is good in literacy, with some outstanding features in Year 6, where parents are also involved in the dialogue. Marking of numeracy work is satisfactory, although it does not always give pupils a detailed enough picture of what they need to do to improve. Too often teachers do not use what they know about pupils' achievements in numeracy to set sufficiently challenging work and pupils spend too much time in lessons consolidating what they already understand.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum which is broad, balanced and meets the needs of the pupils. Provision for pupils learning English as an additional language is good and enables these pupils to access the full curriculum.

Support for pupils with learning difficulties is also good. Staff in the Reception classes and Years 1 and 2 make good use of the very limited space in classrooms to provide rich learning experiences. Planning for information and communication technology (ICT) is satisfactory. The school has rightly identified the need to make more use of ICT to improve pupils' learning in other subjects.

There are opportunities to develop pupils' self-confidence, for example in working collaboratively, which will help their future economic well-being. Pupils are taught how to stay safe, and how to be healthy, ensuring that they are aware of the benefits of exercise and the need for a balanced diet.

The many and varied school clubs contribute effectively to the pupils' enjoyment of the curriculum and are well attended. A very wide range of visits, such as the recent residential to Alton Castle for Year 6, do much to enhance pupils' awareness of the world around them. Visits from organisations such as the Fire Service and the RSPCA enrich the pupils' understanding of society. Very good opportunities for pupils to learn about the multicultural nature of British society are evident in the curriculum and through displays around the school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school cares for, guides and supports the pupils well. Procedures for child protection are satisfactory and there are well established procedures for health and safety. The school works well with a range of other professionals to ensure pupils have access to suitable support. Parents appreciate this and say that the school cares well for their children. This caring and supportive environment nurtures a climate of openness where pupils have trust in the staff and have opportunities to share their concerns. Pupils receive good guidance to promote their own safety both inside and outside school. They are aware of issues regarding having a balanced diet, and have a very good knowledge of what makes them healthy. They enjoy being in a healthy school.

The school has good procedures in place for tracking pupils' progress in English and makes effective use of the information to help pupils to understand what they need to do to improve. There are good procedures in place for assessing work in mathematics but teachers do not make the best use of the information. Pupils and their parents are very clear about the levels that they are working at in both English and mathematics and what pupils need to achieve to move forward.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and he is well supported by colleagues. The leadership team are very effective in evaluating the school's work and have an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. There is a clear focus on raising achievement and the very effective guidance provided by senior staff has ensured standards in reading and writing are well above average. Subject leaders have reacted very positively to the relatively disappointing results in national tests in mathematics. Additional support and guidance, improved assessment procedures and more effective use of staff have resulted in higher standards in mathematics. The subject leader recognises, however, the need to ensure all teachers make more effective use of assessment data to pitch the work at the correct level and avoid the average and more able pupils repeating work unnecessarily.

There are clear procedures in place to ensure that staff and resources are used efficiently and that the nature of the split site does not have a negative impact on the pupils' education. Parents are consulted regularly and most have a high opinion of the school and support it well. The school council is valued and pupils' views are taken seriously. Governors support the school well, fulfil their statutory duties effectively and hold it to account for the standards attained.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you all for your welcome when we visited the school and for talking to us and telling us all we needed to know. We particularly liked:

The good standards you achieved in most of your work.

Your very good behaviour and your enthusiasm for lessons and other activities.

The very good relationships you have with one another and with the staff.

The interesting and wide range of activities that you all take part in.

The way you are becoming aware of the importance of eating healthily and taking part in more exercise.

The way adults look after you and the support they give you to help you do your best.

To make it even better, we have asked the school to:

Make sure that all of you are doing work that is challenging in mathematics, particularly those of you who find it a little easy.

Make better use of information from tests to keep a closer eye on how well you are doing.

I hope you continue to work hard and enjoy your time at school.

Yours sincerely

Paul Edwards Lead Inspector