



St Gregory's Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 103721
LEA Coventry
Inspection number 276982
Inspection dates 15 May 2006 to 16 May 2006
Reporting inspector John Eadie AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Harry Rose Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Coventry
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		West Midlands CV2 5AT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	024 76445900
Number on roll	181	Fax number	024 76650274
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	
Date of previous inspection	22 November 1999	Headteacher	Mr P J Ryan

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average-sized Voluntary Aided Catholic school serves a changing housing area towards the eastern edge of Coventry. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is increasing and is broadly average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is also increasing fairly quickly and is above average. Almost half of these pupils do not speak English at home. When they start in the Reception class, children's levels of skills and knowledge are now significantly below those expected and are lower than they were in the past. The school has recently won a number of awards, including ones for encouraging pupils to adopt a healthy lifestyle and for pupils' work in protecting the environment.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and gives satisfactory value for money. The school's own evaluation of its effectiveness is more positive than that of inspectors because it judges leadership and management to be good rather than satisfactory. Weaknesses identified are not addressed quickly enough and the school's monitoring systems, although thorough, are not fully effective in improving pupils' achievement. However, there are some good aspects to the school. In particular, parents recognise this as 'a very friendly and caring school' that 'provides an environment which nurtures as well as educates'.

Children make a good start in the Reception class due to the good provision for them. Pupils generally make satisfactory progress from Year 1 to Year 6 because teaching is satisfactory, although good support for pupils with learning difficulties and those learning English ensures that they do well. Teachers do not always provide sufficiently challenging work for more able pupils. Although targets have recently started to be set for pupils' progress, these targets do not allow pupils or their parents to see clearly what pupils need to do to improve their work. The pupils enjoy a good curriculum. Their personal development is good as a result of the good levels of care and guidance provided.

Satisfactory progress has been made since the previous inspection and the school is soundly placed to continue to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers always provide work that challenges pupils of all abilities, particularly the more able.
- Set targets that enable pupils and their parents to see what it is that pupils need to do next to improve their work.
- Improve the effectiveness of monitoring by ensuring that it is clearly focused on raising standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards by the time the pupils leave are broadly average and their progress is satisfactory. Children enter the Reception class with levels of skills and knowledge significantly below those expected. They make good progress to reach standards a little below those expected by the time they start in Year 1. Pupils in Year 2 are working at below average standards, which represents satisfactory progress from their below average starting points at the beginning of Year 1. Satisfactory progress continues through Years 3 to 6. Pupils currently in Year 6 are working at broadly average levels and the standards they achieved in the tests in Year 2 were similar. All through the school there are too few pupils working at higher levels as there are too often insufficient levels of challenge for them. This is reflected in the fact that the realistic targets set for the proportion of pupils to reach the higher levels were missed by some way in the tests in Year 6 last year. Targets for the proportion of pupils to reach the

expected levels were met. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities and those who do not speak English at home are making good progress because of the good support they are given.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' good personal development and well-being are successfully fostered by St. Gregory's strong Catholic ethos. Pupils make good strides in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and are becoming well-rounded citizens.

Pupils have good attitudes to their work and clearly enjoy school; as one parent said, 'He always wants to come, even in the holidays'. Attendance is only satisfactory, however, in spite of the school's efforts to improve this. Pupils behave well, both in lessons and at playtimes. They generally get on well with each other and there are very few incidents of bullying or racism. Pupils are aware of what they need to do to stay safe and healthy. Even the youngest children, for example, negotiate the stairs carefully and all understand the components of a healthy diet. Pupils have a voice at St. Gregory's and the school council is instrumental in conveying pupils' ideas to the school staff. Pupils take on a range of responsibilities to ease the day-to-day running of the school. This sense of duty and co-operation is helping them to develop important skills for later life as well as making a good contribution to the school community. Within lessons, however, pupils do not always have the opportunity to develop their initiative and independence.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory and pupils are learning at the expected rate. There are a number of good features to teaching. In the Reception class, teaching is good. A wide range of carefully targeted activities is planned for these children and the school is fortunate in having a good number of skilled volunteers who ensure that activities can be successfully carried out. A strength of teaching is the very good relationships that pupils share with adults and each other. Teachers also have high expectations of good behaviour. Because of these strengths, pupils want to do well for their teachers and so they work hard.

Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning, particularly in the support that they give for those with learning difficulties or disabilities and those who do not speak English at home. These pupils are therefore able to make good progress relative to their abilities. Inconsistencies in teaching mostly arise in the way that work is matched to individual needs. This is particularly so for the more able pupils, who are not always given sufficiently challenging work. The school has recently started tracking pupils' progress through the school, but pupils are not given clear targets to show how they can improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The learning experiences planned for pupils are good and enhanced by a good range of interesting activities beyond lessons. Staff in the Reception class make best use of their small temporary classroom and outside space to organise work well in all areas of learning. Work planned for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is enriched by a range of innovative ventures. These include French, Spanish and German lessons in Years 3 to 6, basketball coaching, and all pupils in Years 4 and 5 learn the flute. Residential trips for older pupils to Alton Castle and Dol-y-Moch help pupils to grow in confidence and prepare them well for later life. Work is adapted well for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, but there is not always sufficient challenge for more able pupils. There is scope to make more links between subjects in order to make work more relevant and interesting. Pupils enjoy the numerous after-school clubs. There is a good programme for teaching pupils to stay healthy and safe.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This area of the school's work is good. Very good relationships between adults and pupils underpin the good personal support given to all learners. Staff know the pupils well and strive to do their best for them within the caring Catholic ethos of the school. Consequently, pupils trust the staff and said that 'they are very kind'. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Pupils are clear about what they are expected to learn in lessons, but are not aware of what they personally need to do to move forward in their learning. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are not routinely told what the targets are in their individual programmes of work. There are good procedures in place to ensure that pupils are kept healthy and safe. Staff are well aware of the school's child protection arrangements, for example, and there are regular checks to make sure that the school and grounds are safe.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory, with some good features. There is a clear unity of purpose and sense of community in the school, emanating from the headteacher, which has at its heart the teachings of Jesus. There has not, however, been a sufficiently clear focus on raising standards. Initiatives have only recently been put in place to raise expectations for more able pupils, for example, although this was identified as an area for development some time ago.

Although the school evaluated some areas of provision more positively than the inspectors, self-evaluation is thorough and a good analysis of last year's test results was carried out. The school has a very thorough plan for checking on its effectiveness. Nevertheless, areas identified for development are not always addressed quickly enough as some weaknesses crop up year after year.

Parents are consulted regularly and their views, along with those of the pupils, are built into the school development plan when appropriate. Governors provide a good range of expertise, are keenly interested in the school and have every confidence in the management of the school. However, they rely too much on what they are told rather than checking on the effectiveness of the school for themselves. Checking on progress towards improvements in the school development plan is a good example of this, where their information-gathering relies too heavily on the reports they receive from school staff.

Bearing in mind the progress made in many aspects of the school and the commitment of all staff and governors, the school is soundly placed to move forward.

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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?	3	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	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	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?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	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?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	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

We very much enjoyed our visit to your school and looking at your work and listening to what you had to say. We were very impressed with how polite you all were and how welcome you made us feel.

We think the following are the best things about your school:

The way the teachings of Jesus are acted out in your everyday life.

You behave well and work hard.

All adults look after you well and make sure you are safe.

You know how to stay safe and healthy.

Learning German, Spanish and French as well as learning how to play the flute are tremendous opportunities.

These are the things that we have told your school it needs to improve:

- You are not always given hard enough work.
- You do not know clearly enough how to improve your work.
- When your headteacher and staff check on how well the school is doing, they do not always use the information to help you to achieve higher standards.