



St Hubert's Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 103999
LEA Sandwell
Inspection number 277046
Inspection dates 9 March 2006 to 10 March 2006
Reporting inspector Graeme Bassett AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Wolverhampton Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Oldbury
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		West Midlands B68 0LP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0121 4222629
Number on roll	214	Fax number	0121 4222629
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Father Peter Blundell
Date of previous inspection	13 September 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Clare McNally

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors

Description of the school

This is a one-form entry school and serves mainly the immediate locality but several pupils attend from further away because they wish for a Catholic education. Most children are White British, with a small proportion of Asian British origin. A few speak English as an additional language. The economic status of the local area is below average. The children's attainment on entry to the school is below expected levels in reading and writing and average in all other areas of learning. The number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is typical for a school of this size. The school has received the following awards* :- Basic Skills Quality Mark, Artsmark Gold, Activemark Gold, Healthy School Platinum, National ICT Mark, Eco-schools Silver, Diana Memorial Award, Investors in People and Teaching Award winner.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The inspection evidence agrees with the school's own evaluation that this is an effective school that gives good value for money. Leadership and management are good. The new headteacher and assistant headteacher provide a clear direction to the work of the school. This in turn has improved the quality of teaching and raised whole-school expectations. Teaching is good overall and sometimes outstanding, bringing fun to learning. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well in all subjects to develop the skills pupils will need for their future economic well-being. The provision in the Foundation Stage is good and children make good progress, and very good progress in reading. In the rest of the school, most pupils make good progress and achievement is good by the end of Year 6. High standards have been maintained consistently over the past five years and are currently above average in mathematics and science and average in English. However, some of the more capable children could do better in English. The pupils' personal development and well-being are excellent because of the high level of care that the school provides. Behaviour is outstanding and pupils show real concern for others. As a result, they grow in confidence, have excellent attitudes and are fully motivated to learn. The curriculum is good and lessons are exciting. However, the good marking seen in some classes is not consistently effective in all classes and targets shared with pupils are sometimes too complex to enable them to understand what they need to learn next. The school has successfully addressed the issues from the previous inspection and has a strong capacity to continue the good improvements.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the more able pupils reach higher standards in reading and writing.
- Use marking more effectively and consistently to set specific targets so that pupils can carry out self-assessments in order to understand what they need to learn next.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

learning. In the most recent national tests, standards by the end of Year 6 were above average in mathematics and science and average in English. Pupils with learning difficulties and those learning English as an additional language are served well by the school. There is no significant difference between their achievements and those of other pupils. Children enter the Foundation Stage with similar standards to other children of their age, except in reading and writing, which are below average. By the time they enter Year 1, they make good progress and reach the expected levels for their age in all areas of learning. They progress very well in reading to bring their standards up to expected levels. Good teaching and well structured literacy lessons ensure that progress throughout Years 1 and 2 continues to be good. Over the past five years, standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6 have been consistently above average. However, some pupils capable of reaching the higher

levels in English are not doing so and this has lowered the school's overall English performance. The challenging targets set for mathematics in 2005 have been met but targets set for the higher levels in English have not. The more able pupils are now on course to meet the targets set this year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. They are eager to come to school and enjoy their lessons very much. Their attendance is good. Behaviour is outstanding, with incidents of bullying being rare. The school deals well with any concerns pupils may have. Because of the school's Catholic ethos, pupils develop an extremely strong sense of right and wrong. The pupils state that 'the school listens to what we have to say'. They are valued as individuals whilst growing in confidence and self-esteem. Pupils are a delight to talk to and are very polite. Pupils are becoming successful citizens and are prepared effectively for their future economic well-being. They have a very good sense of community needs and are rightly proud of their thoughtful displays in the 'Citizenship corridor'. The pupils know they need to be safe and understand the need for a healthy lifestyle. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. The pupils learn how to care for each other and help to protect their environment. Exciting opportunities to visit and take part in productions at local theatres successfully enhance their cultural development. The pupils are very knowledgeable about other cultures and lifestyles because of the school's links with India and South Africa. They benefit greatly from the sharing in multi-cultural celebrations, such as Mardi Gras, with local schools.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is good, with many aspects being outstanding. As a result, all pupils demonstrate a thorough enjoyment in their learning and show positive attitudes towards their work. Teachers plan stimulating tasks, make very good use of ICT and suitably challenge all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and those who are learning English as an additional language. Because of this, lessons are productive and almost always lively and imaginative. For instance, pupils in Year 1 were observed throwing and catching bean bags while practising number bonds up to 10. This developed quick thinking and the pupils thoroughly enjoyed being challenged by their partner. Teachers encourage pupils to develop a willingness to 'have a go' and to try out things for themselves, without fear of failing. Where teaching is outstanding, the teachers encourage pupils to have high expectations and to think creatively. For example, in Year 4, pupils' enthusiasm for writing a rap poem was expertly channelled into the development of rhyming couplets and an adventurous exploration of new words. The expertise of teaching assistants has a strong influence upon raising pupils' achievement. Regular assessments are used well to plot each pupil's progress but as

yet not all teachers use the good marking strategies seen in some classes. In addition, the short-term targets are not always shared effectively enough with pupils to help them understand what they need to learn next.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is exciting and of good quality. Many activities involve practical work and tasks are used imaginatively to encourage and support learning very well. The many visits inspire pupils to do their best. For example, children talk enthusiastically about Victorian times and their study linked to the Midland Metro which provided practical experiences in decision-making. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties is very good, and so they achieve well. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and a recent focus on reading has raised effectively the children's attainment and enthusiasm for reading. Very good provision for ICT has been improved recently in the library for lending books, in registration procedures and in imaginative presentations, ensuring that the pupils develop above-average skills. Good opportunities are given to learn Spanish. The curriculum promoting healthy lifestyles is well thought out and is understood by the pupils. Pupils gain great enjoyment from the wide range of school clubs and sporting activities. Pupils have many opportunities to take on responsibilities around the school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support given to pupils are good. The school has very good procedures for safeguarding the health and safety of pupils. Parents appreciate the school's family atmosphere and know that their children are well cared for. Staff are aware of child protection arrangements, and there are good links with outside experts to promote the pupils' welfare. Children in the Foundation Stage are helped to settle in happily and they quickly make new friends. The school has effective procedures to track each pupil's attainment and progress from year to year. Targets were discussed with pupils and responses indicated some knowledge of what they had to learn. However, some pupils are not sufficiently involved enough in assessing their own work and sometimes targets are too complex for all pupils to understand precisely what they have to learn next. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress and are supported well to reach the specific targets set for them in their individual programmes. The teachers work closely with the parents to ensure that pupils make good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good and the inspection evidence supports the evaluations made by the school. The recently appointed headteacher is the driving force behind the school's development. She has a clear vision for the future development of the school and is ably supported by the assistant headteacher and

leading teachers. Everyone is encouraged and supported to do their best. As a result, many teachers are acclaimed for their expertise and the school provides support for other schools in literacy, ICT, physical education and leadership and management. The school provides a happy and productive atmosphere based upon its Catholic ethos. The school is fully inclusive and strives for the highest quality in all that it does. Thorough monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning has resulted in significant improvement and raised expectations. Exceptional links with other schools and outside agencies provide added expertise and help when needed. The governing body is strongly supportive of the school and knows it well. Governors are aware of the pupils' standards and achievement and know that more attention needs to be given to raising the achievements of more able pupils in English. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. The outside area for the Foundation Stage is now fully developed and there is now more effective adult support in each classroom. The school is now in a strong position to make further improvements. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage and for pupils with learning difficulties and those with English as an additional language are good. The parents are fully behind the school. They are consulted well and their views considered and highly valued, creating a strong partnership.

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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?	1	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	1	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

Dear Children Thank you for making us so welcome and telling us about your school. We can see that you all enjoy coming to school and that you have many friends. We enjoyed looking at your books and chatting to some of you about your school. What we liked most about your school

- It is a good school and your headteacher leads it well.
- Your teachers teach you well and your lessons are enjoyable.
- Your behaviour and the ways you support each other are excellent.
- You make good progress and the standard of your work is good.

What we have asked your school to do now

- Make the work harder in reading and writing for some of you.
- Improve the marking of your work and tell you precisely what you have to learn next.

We hope that you continue to enjoy your lessons. Yours sincerely Graeme Bassett Lead Inspector
Alexandra House 33 Kingsway London WC2B 6SE T 0207 421 6800 F 0207 421 6707
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