



# St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 107116  
**LEA** Sheffield  
**Inspection number** 277710  
**Inspection dates** 12 June 2006 to 13 June 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Ms Joan McKenna CfBT Lead Inspector

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Chancet Wood Drive
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Sheffield
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		South Yorkshire S8 7TR
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0114 274 5597
<b>Number on roll</b>	210	<b>Fax number</b>	0114 274 6499
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Fr J Metcalfe
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	13 November 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs A Brighton

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 12 June 2006 - 13 June 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 277710
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Pupils in this slightly smaller than average Catholic school come from a mixture of backgrounds, although the proportion eligible for free school meals is below average. Around a fifth of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, all of whom speak English fluently. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. However, the school has an Integrated Resource which nine pupils with statements for complex special educational needs attend, resulting in an above average proportion of pupils with statements. The staffing situation has been disrupted over recent years due to some long-term illnesses, including that of the deputy headteacher. The staff concerned have now returned. There are two classes currently taught by temporary teachers, but permanent appointments for September 2006 have been made.

## 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's effectiveness is satisfactory. It has been more effective in the past, but recently pupils' achievement has been affected by the impact of staffing difficulties. As a result, achievement that was good is now satisfactory. Pupils enter the school with broadly average standards for their age and progress well in the Foundation Stage. Standards when pupils leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2 have been well above average in the past but they fell in 2005. Overall, test results were not significantly above average: at the higher level in mathematics and in writing at all levels they were below average. Evidence from the current year confirms that pupils in the Foundation Stage continue to make good progress, as do pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, but that achievement for the majority of pupils is satisfactory. It is least good in writing, mathematics, and for higher attaining pupils. Achievement is partly as it is because teaching is only satisfactory. Some teaching is good, but the quality is inconsistent and there is not enough attention paid to ensuring that work is well matched to pupils' different abilities, especially the most able. The underdevelopment of assessment and systems for tracking pupils' progress also contributes. It results in a lack of information on how pupils are doing and where action to promote improvement is required. The school has strengths in the pastoral areas, however. The care and support provided for pupils' personal development and well-being are good and, as a result, pupils feel safe, have positive relationships with their peers and behave well. Their spiritual development is outstanding. The curriculum is also good, as is provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Leadership and management are satisfactory, stronger in pastoral areas than academic. The headteacher sets the tone for the positive ethos which welcomes and values all pupils. However, the staffing difficulties have slowed developments. Systems for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the school by senior and middle leaders and for gathering and analysing data about pupils' performance are not comprehensive enough. Progress since the last inspection has been mixed and in some respects practice is not as good as it was then. The staffing issues have now been resolved and with a full complement of permanent teachers due in post for the start of next term, the school is well placed to improve.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve achievement, especially in writing and mathematics and for more able pupils.
- Improve teaching and make sure that work is well matched to the needs of all pupils.
- Ensure that pupils' progress is regularly assessed throughout the school and that the resulting information is analysed to identify where action is necessary to improve achievement.
- Ensure that there are comprehensive systems for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the school by senior and middle leaders.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. From entry to the school, they progress well towards meeting the goals set for pupils at the end of the Foundation Stage due to good provision for pupils of that age. Most achieve their targets. Staffing difficulties have continued to have an impact across the rest of the school this year. Broadly average standards are reached by the end of Key Stage 1, albeit with a slight decline over recent years. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards are broadly similar to last year, although more Year 6 pupils are predicted to gain the higher level in the tests in 2006. Achievement for most pupils across the school is satisfactory. Some individuals of all ages achieve well, especially in reading and science, but achievement is less good in writing and mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because they receive good support. Higher attaining pupils, however, do not achieve as well as they are capable of as their work is often too easy.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Personal development and well-being are good and pupils enjoy coming to school. Every child matters at St Thomas of Canterbury and all pupils are fully included in school life. Pupils feel safe and know that adults care for them. They in turn show care and concern for each other. They correctly describe the school as a 'happy place' where children 'behave well and get on together'. Pupils express their opinions politely, listening well to others. The spiritual ethos of the school is outstanding, with assemblies and daily prayers introducing reverence into the school day. Working towards a Healthy School Award has raised children's awareness of the need to make healthy lifestyle choices. The elected school council effectively represents the views of the pupils and they feel they are empowered to make suggestions. The Fairtrade enterprise project organised by Year 6 has allowed children to experience the world of work whilst giving them a greater awareness of world issues. Attendance is satisfactory.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Some teaching is good, but the quality is inconsistent across the school. Positive relationships are evident in most classes and pupils work hard to do what teachers ask of them. When tasks are interesting, appropriately challenging and presented dynamically, such as observed in Year 6 and the Foundation Stage, for example, pupils respond enthusiastically and achieve well. A common weakness in lessons, however, is that assessment is not used well enough to inform planning. The result is that work does not meet the full range of needs and this particularly affects more able pupils as work is not always hard enough for them. In addition, some explanations and instructions by teachers are not

clear, limiting learning. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to supporting pupils in the Foundation Stage and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, helping them to learn well. Pupils' work is marked with supportive comments. Some feedback is given on how well pupils are doing and how they can improve their work, but there is not enough of this. There is some use of target setting for groups, but this is not developed well enough for individuals.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

Curriculum provision, including for the Foundation Stage and for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is good. An interesting range of enrichment activities links subjects across the curriculum. The good range of extra-curricular opportunities and sports tournaments is very popular. Visits out of school, including a residential for Year 6 pupils, bring the outside world into the curriculum. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has been greatly improved since the last inspection and is now good. The promotion of pupils' personal development is a strength. A review of the curriculum has resulted in innovative plans to improve provision further.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care and support for pupils are good. The school is a caring community. Its ethos is outstanding. The health, safety and well-being of pupils are priorities. Positive relationships ensure a supportive and encouraging environment within which pupils feel happy, safe and secure. All pupils are valued and empowered to make decisions. Risk assessment procedures and child protection systems are effective. There are very good links with outside agencies to provide additional support and guidance when needed, for example, for pupils in the Integrated Resource whose needs are met well. Parents are pleased with the good levels of care given to their children. They feel the school is a 'safe and friendly learning environment which supports the integration of pupils with special needs'. While pastoral systems are well established and effective, systems for monitoring and analysing pupils' academic progress are not as effective, especially in Key Stage 2. Progress is not checked regularly enough or in enough detail.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory, stronger in pastoral areas than academic. The headteacher sets the tone for the very inclusive ethos and all pupils are fully valued as individuals. This is reflected in the high quality of care and its positive effect on pupils' personal development. The impact of staffing difficulties on development, however, means that some management systems, such as for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the school and of pupils' progress by senior and middle leaders are not comprehensive or systematic enough. As a result, although general strengths and weaknesses are well known, there is not a detailed enough view of precisely how

effective the school is. This is responsible for the school's view of itself being too generous. Governance is satisfactory. Some governors are actively involved, for example, in promoting spiritual matters and improving communication with parents, but the approach to academic issues is not rigorous enough. Progress since the last inspection has been mixed, although the key issue of improving ICT has been met well. However, with the staffing difficulties now resolved and a full complement of permanent teachers due in post for September, the school has the capacity to improve further.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	2	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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 for being so friendly and making us feel welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and watching you learn very much.

What we liked most about your school

- You like school and work hard in lessons.
- Your teachers and other adults care for you well and make sure that you feel safe and happy.
- Your school thinks everyone is important and it values every single one of you.
- You behave well and take good care of each other.
- You say prayers in assemblies and in your classes seriously and maturely.
- The school arranges lots of extra activities for you to enjoy and help you develop your interests.

What we have asked the school to do now

- Help all of you do even better in your work, especially in writing and mathematics, including those of you who find your work a bit easy.
- Make sure that the work you are given to do in lessons is planned so that it is not too easy or hard for any of you.
- Make sure that all the teachers check your progress regularly and look at the information carefully so they know how to help you improve your work.
- Check what is happening in school more thoroughly so that the managers and governors know how good it is and what to do to make it even better.

We hope that you continue to be happy at school and that you continue to work hard.