



# St Augustine's Catholic Primary School and Nursery

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 108399  
**LEA** Gateshead  
**Inspection number** 277964  
**Inspection dates** 5 October 2005 to 6 October 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Moira Fitzpatrick

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Colegate
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Leam Lane
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		Gateshead, Tyne and Wear
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 4692949
<b>Number on roll</b>	356	<b>Fax number</b>	0191 4692949
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Geraldine Spoors
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 June 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr K F Naughton

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 5 October 2005 - 6 October 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 277964
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

St Augustine's Primary School and Nursery is a voluntary-aided Roman Catholic school situated on a large housing estate to the east of Gateshead. The school is much larger than most primary schools, with 356 pupils on roll. When children join the nursery their attainment is generally below average for children of this age, although the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is average. Some 15 pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds but only 1 needs additional support in English. The school has received a number of awards in recent years, including the School Achievement Award, Healthy School and Healthy Eating Awards, and the Investors in People Award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school with a number of outstanding features. It gives good value for money. These judgements match the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness. The quality of teaching is generally good and pupils make good overall progress and achieve well, although standards in writing need to be raised. The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are outstanding. Pupils all feel safe and happy in school and always know where to turn for help. The school is well led and managed and all staff are committed to raising standards. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. The school consults them and their children about its work and acts on their suggestions for improvement. Pupils enjoy school. Their personal development is good, but the attendance of a small minority of pupils is unsatisfactory.

The Foundation Stage is effective and the children make a good start to their learning from a low baseline when they start in the nursery.

The school has improved well since the last inspection. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses well and this, combined with the skills and expertise of all staff, place it in a good position to continue to improve.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing throughout the school.
- Improve the attendance of a minority of pupils.
- Improve governors' first-hand knowledge of the school so they can evaluate the school's effectiveness.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Children make good progress overall during their time in the Foundation Stage: in their personal, social and emotional development they make very good progress. By the time they join Year 1 most have progressed to the expected standard for their age in all areas of learning except in language and literacy, and in mathematical development. Good teaching and a good curriculum in the ensuing years sustain pupils' good progress and, by the end of Year 6, pupils reach above average standards in mathematics and science, and average standards in English. This is a good overall achievement.

All groups of pupils achieve equally well. Pupils are well supported in their learning by teachers' thorough planning for their different needs, and by good support from teaching assistants. Pupils who have learning difficulties often make very good progress because of the skilful work of the specialist teacher and their class teachers. The school's careful monitoring of standards has alerted it to the need to improve pupils' writing skills, which have declined compared with other aspects of their learning in the last year or two.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. They behave well and their attentiveness in lessons helps them to learn effectively. They say they enjoy learning because teachers make it interesting and good fun. When asked to work together, pupils of all ages show good social skills and understand the need to give as well as take. Year 6 pupils organise, support and care for younger pupils in the playground and around the school. They serve on the school council and act as buddies or special friends. They enjoy this responsibility, which helps their development as mature young people. Pupils learn about healthy lifestyles and are encouraged to eat healthily. Attendance is broadly average, having dipped in the last year, because a minority of parents took their children on holiday in term time.

Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Their spiritual development is excellent and is rooted firmly in the teachings of the Catholic Church. Teachers lead by example in their care and respect for pupils who, in turn, reflect these feelings in their dealings with others. Because of this, pupils of all ages and abilities have strong feelings of self-worth which underpin the confidence they show in their learning and the very good relationships they form. Moral development is well promoted through clear rules and teachers' expectations. Most aspects of pupils' cultural development are good, but they have few opportunities to learn about the diversity of British society.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers' very good planning shows that they have a sharp picture of the learning needs of different groups of pupils. They set tasks that are challenging, but so well structured that pupils can work at them independently or need little input from adults. Teachers set short-term targets that allow pupils to recognise their successes and gain in confidence for further challenges. Teachers' assessment of pupils' learning, and their use of the information from this, are both very good and guide the good progress that pupils make. In a few lessons, teachers get the balance wrong between their input and pupils' independent work. This happens when teachers talk for too long, leaving too little time for pupils to complete their work and, in such lessons, pupils' progress is only satisfactory. Teaching assistants teach their assigned pupils well so that they make the same good progress as others. Good teaching of basic skills ensures that pupils have good foundations on which to build further when they leave the school.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a good curriculum for pupils of all ages. It is broad and balanced and gives due weight to personal, social and health education. It is also well planned to meet the learning needs and interests of all pupils and is very well enriched, for example, through links with schools in France, Italy, Spain and Romania. In the last two school years, all pupils from Reception to Year 6 have had weekly lessons in French. This year the language teaching is being extended to include Spanish. Year 6 pupils shared a week's residential visit with a group of Spanish children in the last year. Many pupils take advantage of the good range of activities after school in sport, music, art and dance. These are open to pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 and contribute well to their social and personal development as they learn to mix and work with new friends.

The school's good links with local schools and colleges provide additional experiences, such as information and communications technology (ICT) at a local secondary school. The annual residential visit for Year 6 pupils is seen as a high spot in the calendar because the outdoor pursuits and team challenges give pupils the chance to shine beyond the academic sphere.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school's care, guidance and support for its pupils are outstanding. Because the procedures for health and safety, risk assessment and child protection are thorough, pupils learn in a safe and very secure environment where they feel very well cared for. Pupils say that their teachers know them very well and that there is always someone to turn to for help. Parents' responses in a recent survey fully echo these views. One parent was moved to write, 'I was overwhelmed by the sense of love and care and felt a great feeling of belonging'.

Regular and rigorous assessment of pupils' learning is another outstanding aspect of the school's provision. Teachers make very effective use of the information gathered to help all pupils to make progress. Some pupils have learning difficulties which are accurately assessed and their parents receive advice to enable them to give their children the support they need.

Teachers keep a careful watch for changes in individual pupils' behaviour or mood and take effective action to deal with their problems. The school chaplain ensures that pupils have access to pastoral support and sympathetic advice. In discussion, pupils spoke of how the chaplain helped them to 'see both sides of the story' and to gain a better understanding of their own and other's responses.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Inspectors agree with the school's own evaluation of the quality of leadership and management as good. Under the highly effective leadership of the Headteacher,

subject leaders play their part in helping the school to improve and the school's effective monitoring of provision assists them in their role. Consequently, the school's self-evaluation is very good and gives a clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The leadership and management of mathematics, of the provision for pupils with learning difficulties, and of assessment systems throughout the school are very good. All staff receive very effective professional development to extend their skills, which leads to better progress and enjoyment of learning.

The school draws upon expertise and diversity from the local authority and local universities which, through new methods and approaches, give it a vibrancy.

Whilst all staff are well involved in the school's self-evaluation procedures, this is not yet the case for governors. Currently, governors' knowledge of the school depends too much on headteacher's reports and presentations by staff and too little on first-hand knowledge of its work. Governors are talking with the school about how they can extend their roles in order to gain better knowledge of the school and so hold it more fully to account.

The school has shown a good capacity for improvement, taking into account the improvements made since it was last inspected and the skills and expertise of its staff.

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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>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<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>	2	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>	1	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>	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	1	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	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

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7 October 2005

Dear Children

Thank you all very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school, and a special thanks for helping us find out why you love your school so much.

Here are the things we liked most about your school

You work hard and learn well. You seem to do very well in mathematics and science – keep up the good work!

Your teachers work hard and take great care when planning your lessons. They also take great care when they mark your work and show you how to do even better.

You look after each other very well and show a lot of care and respect for all the people who are in your school.

You listen very well in lessons and are keen to learn. Your behaviour is good in nearly all lessons and this helps everyone learn better, so well done!

You told us that adults in the school care for you and look after you well. We agree – we even think that their care for you is excellent. It was good of you to tell us that you appreciate it – so we could tell them.

You have a lot of confidence in your learning and you know what to do to help you improve. You are also adventurous and like trying new ways of learning. This helps you learn more, when you go on visits, for instance, or have visitors to your class.

You love to take on responsibility and look for ways to make your school better by making suggestions to the school council or helping in class. We think this gives your school a very special and happy feel because everyone joins in. We thought your Road Safety Campaign was a great idea and showed that you are good citizens.

What we have asked your school to do now

Help you become better writers so that your English is as good as your mathematics and science.

Help some of you to attend school more regularly because learning is such an important part of your life.

Invite your school governors in to see you at work and enjoy the lovely things you do.

Our thanks again for your good manners and your kindness towards us.

Mrs Fitzpatrick

(Lead Inspector)

Annex B