



St Marys Roman Catholic Primary School Aided

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 108618
LEA North Tyneside
Inspection number 278011
Inspection dates 19 October 2005 to 20 October 2005
Reporting inspector Janet Bennett

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Farringdon Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Cullercoats
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		North Shields, Tyne and Wear
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0191 2008812
Number on roll	265	Fax number	
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr F Stimpson
Date of previous inspection	1 November 1999	Headteacher	Mr P Murray

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School has 221 pupils. Its nursery unit provides part time education for an additional 52 children. An after-school club operates daily during term time, providing care for 50 pupils. The school is popular and attracts pupils from outside as well as within the local area. Children's attainment on entry is above the expected level for their age. The proportion of pupils identified with learning difficulties is very low. Fewer than 4% of pupils take free school meals. A small number of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds.

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 judges its overall effectiveness to be good; inspectors agree with this. Pupils' achievement is good because the school monitors and promotes their progress well. The excellent curriculum and good teaching lead to consistently high standards in English, mathematics and science. The personal development of pupils and the care, guidance and support given by staff are outstanding and contribute very well to pupils' good achievement. Pupils' spiritual, moral, and social development is also outstanding. The school has rightly identified the need to improve pupils' understanding of the diverse cultures of British society.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary. Relationships are very strong and as a result pupils feel safe, secure and happy in school. They are proud of their school and parents value highly the work of all staff. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and achieve standards that are above average. Because staff provide very good role models and care, children grow in confidence and learn to value and respect one another.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's clear vision gives strong direction and common purpose to the work of the school. The governing body provides satisfactory leadership. Governors are actively involved in monitoring the school's work, but many are new and do not yet play a full part in setting the school's priorities. The school has made good progress since the last inspection. Its capacity for further improvement is good because school leaders have a clear understanding of its strengths and priority areas. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

In order to raise standards further the school should address the issues identified through its own self-evaluation procedures, focusing particularly upon:

- improving pupils' understanding of multicultural Britain
- enabling its governors to make a more informed and significant contribution to school improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress from nursery to Year 6 and standards are high. All groups, including pupils with learning difficulties, achieve well. Children enter nursery attaining standards above those expected for their age. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage because relationships are very good and teachers plan activities that interest them and involve them in their learning. This rate and quality of learning continue and, as a result, pupils consistently attain standards well above those expected for their age in Year 2.

The targets set for learning in the junior classes challenge pupils to maintain their good achievement. Their progress and targets are regularly reviewed to ensure that all pupils make the progress expected of them. By the end of Year 6, pupils consistently attain standards that are significantly higher than average. Many pupils attain the higher Level 5 in English, mathematics and science. The specialist science teacher contributes very well to the good progress pupils make in this subject.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Because of outstanding provision in this area, pupils' achievement in personal development is very high, and the school knows this well. Pupils' enjoyment of the rich opportunities provided for learning is seen in their excellent attendance and participation and in the pride they show in their work. They take responsibility for their learning, relish challenge and try hard to improve. These very positive attitudes strongly influence the good progress they make.

Pupils contribute actively to the life of the school and its wider community through many fund-raising efforts and through initiatives such as the 'buddy system', in which pupils in Year 6 take reception children 'under their wing'. Pupils achieve a very good understanding of what a healthy lifestyle means because of the school's strong emphasis on regular exercise and other aspects of health.

Throughout the school, pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is outstanding. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they show very keen social and self-awareness. Their interpersonal skills are highly developed and they take good care of each other. The school's very strong and caring community spirit gives pupils feelings of safety, security and well-being. As the school recognises, pupils' understanding of the different cultures that make up British society is less well developed.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Inspectors confirm the school's own judgement that teaching and learning are good. Teaching promotes learning well because staff use their good subject knowledge to plan lessons that successfully build on prior learning and challenge pupils to improve. Work is well matched to the needs of different groups so that all pupils progress at a good rate. Pupils with learning difficulties are taught well.

Relationships are very good and the views of pupils are respected. As a result, pupils are confident to contribute actively and to ask for help when it is needed. They say that lessons are interesting because of the varied activities that teachers plan. Some teaching is very good. In these lessons, pupils are challenged very well, the pace is lively, and teachers' enthusiasm gives learning a 'buzz'. Teaching assistants contribute well to pupils' learning because they are valued and involved members of the whole school team. The work of all staff is highly valued by parents.

Assessment is used well to identify the individual needs of learners and track their progress. Teachers adapt their planning to take account of this and stretch pupils to do their best. Teachers involve pupils actively in assessing and evaluating their own learning so that they understand what they do well and how to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Inspectors agree with the school that the curriculum is outstanding. It is broad and varied, meets all statutory requirements, and reflects the needs and interests of pupils very well. The formal curriculum is complemented by a very good range of out-of-hours activities, such as clubs and sport and community events. These give pupils rich opportunities to learn new interests, skills and talents.

The information and communication technology (ICT) suite provides good opportunities for pupils to use computers in their learning, but opportunities for spontaneous use of ICT are limited. The curriculum promotes high standards in literacy, numeracy and ICT. In this respect, it prepares pupils very well for their future economic well-being. Pupils' personal development and their understanding of safe and healthy lifestyles are promoted extremely well. Other professionals are effectively involved in this aspect of the school's work.

The richness of the school's curriculum contributes very well to pupils' enjoyment of learning. The opportunities for pupils to develop a wide range of skills and interests are appreciated by parents.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school judges this aspect of its work to be outstanding and inspectors take the same view. All statutory procedures are in place. Pupils are confident to approach any adult for help, knowing they will be listened to and supported. They feel entirely safe and secure in school and this contributes very well to the progress they make in their learning.

Pupils are very articulate and caring, and confident to try to do things for themselves. This stems from the strongly positive ethos that exists across the school. They air their views on the website, knowing that their comments will be valued, and they show high levels of care for one another, influenced by the very positive role models that staff provide.

Because of the very good induction arrangements and the very good guidance and support they receive, pupils are confident about starting nursery and about transferring to secondary school. Parents and other agencies are involved very well in supporting pupils' personal well-being.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school's own judgement that leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides highly effective leadership and sets a very clear direction for the work of the school. He is instrumental in creating the very positive climate in which pupils' enjoyment of learning is given the highest priority. He is very well supported by the deputy headteacher, and together they have created an effective management structure in which roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. As a result, all staff have active roles in evaluating and enhancing the work of the school. The senior management team is very effective. Clear lines of delegation enable individual members to impact significantly on school improvement.

Governors provide satisfactory leadership. Good progress has been made since the time of the last inspection. Structures that enable governors to monitor the work of the school are now well established and actively pursued. Because many governors are very new to their role, they have too little involvement in evaluating the work of the school and identifying its priorities for improvement.

Self-evaluation procedures are good. They give an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses and enable staff to take action that improves learning. This is evident in the improved standards attained by Year 6 boys in their writing test this year. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and has a good 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>	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	1	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	1	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	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

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?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	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	1	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	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

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE
T 0207 421 6800
F 0207 421 6707
www.ofsted.gov.uk

St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School Aided
Farringdon Road
Cullercoats
North Shields
Tyne and Wear
NE30 3EY

21 October 2005

Dear Children

Thank you for your help in our recent inspection of your school. The inspectors thought that you were very polite and extremely well behaved. You all made us feel very welcome and we agree with your headteacher that you are a credit to your school. You told us that your school is good and we agree with you.

The teaching is good. Adults plan interesting things for you to do that inspire you to learn even more. You all try very hard in lessons and, because of this, your work gets better and better every day. We were really impressed with how sensible and responsible you are and how much you care for each other. We think this is because all of the adults in school encourage you to try to do things for yourselves and show you how to be kind and caring by behaving like that to you. You were very good at giving us your views and telling us what you thought about the school. We saw that all of the other adults in school were interested in your ideas as well. We really enjoyed hearing about the exciting things that you do in school, such as the clubs that run after school, the fund-raising events you organise and the special projects you do, such as your history study about the Second World War. You said you really enjoy these things and we can understand why.

Your headteacher thinks that your school would be even better if teachers planned more activities that would help you to learn about all of the different people who live in Britain today. We agree with him. We also think it would be good if some of the people who work with him in school helped him to find other ways in which your school could become even better.

Thank you again for your help and also thank your parents for their views and opinions.

Yours sincerely

Janet Bennett

Lead Inspector

Annex B