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Inspection Report

**Better
education
and care**

Unique Reference Number 108624
LEA North Tyneside
Inspection number 278013
Inspection dates 23 March 2006 to 24 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Heather Evans

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Rising Sun Cottages
School category	Voluntary aided		Wallsend
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Tyne and Wear NE28 9JW
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0191 2007363
Number on roll	319	Fax number	0191 2007364
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Kathleen Knox
Date of previous inspection	1 November 2000	Headteacher	Mr Alan Egdell

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average Catholic primary school in Wallsend. An average proportion of pupils claim free school meals. Almost all of the pupils are white British; just one speaks a language other than English. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is about average overall but is high in some classes. The new unit for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties caters for children who have been excluded from other schools. On entry to the nursery, children's attainment is below that usually found for children of the same age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Inspection evidence supports the views of the staff and governors about all aspects of the school. This is an outstanding school. Standards are above average and achievement overall is good. The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is outstanding and almost all children achieve the expected learning goals. By the end of Year 2, standards are above the expected level nationally. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment overall has been significantly above the national average in English, mathematics and science for the past three years. Around one third of the pupils attain above the expected level. Pupils from all backgrounds achieve well and their personal development is outstanding. Teaching and the curriculum are both outstanding. Last year, whilst overall standards were maintained, the rate of progress during Key Stage 2 slowed. This was the result in part of an unusually high number of pupils with learning difficulties in the Year 6 classes. The school is confident that problems have been resolved through changes in the style of teaching. Although the school expects to achieve the challenging targets agreed this year, the implementation of its more rigorous assessment procedures is inconsistent. Skills in writing and mental mathematics are much improved. The school works outstandingly well with the local community and outside agencies. The care for all pupils, including those with gifts, talents or learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is outstanding. Parents, pupils and the local community hold the school in very high regard. The issue identified at the previous inspection has been addressed very successfully. As a result of outstanding leadership and management, the school provides excellent value for money and has the will and capacity to continue to improve.

not applicable

What the school should do to improve further

- Apply the newly established assessment procedures consistently.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

When children start school, their attainments are below those that are typical for their age. Children make good progress and by the end of reception class almost all achieve the goals set for their learning. Across the school, pupils continue to make progress and achieve standards in English, mathematics and science that exceed the national average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. By the time they leave the school, there is little difference between the achievements of boys and girls. In the test results in 2005, whilst overall standards remained significantly above the national average for pupils in Year 6, progress and achievement were not as rapid as the school had expected. A number of reasons for this have been identified and swift remedial action has been taken. The quality and style of teaching have been reviewed and teachers track pupils' progress more frequently. Individuals are set more precise targets for their work. Indications are that pupils are working more effectively and progress is

now improving. The school has also identified writing as an additional area for improvement because fewer pupils reach the higher levels in this aspect of their work than in reading. The school is successfully implementing a clear plan for improvement and more pupils are now on course to attain above the expected level in writing. High standards in subjects that are not tested, such as information and communication technology (ICT), add to pupils' overall success.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make as much progress as their peers because of very effective targeted support. Higher achieving pupils have been identified and are very well catered for. Pupils who attend the special unit for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties make rapid progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children enjoy coming to school; they have very good attitudes to learning and think the rich range of activities provided is interesting and fun. They assure inspectors that bullying is not a problem. Attendance is better than that found in most schools. By Year 6, pupils are very confident and eager learners. Excellent relationships, leading to mutual trust and confidence, reflect the school's strong Christian ethos. Children relish their responsibilities as citizens and members of their community. The school council plays an important role in the everyday life of the school; it gives members good experience of responsibility and decision-making. They readily undertake tasks that contribute to the smooth running of the school; for example, acting as 'buddies' at playtime and helping to organise assemblies. They know how to keep safe and to follow a healthy lifestyle.

Children's moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Reflecting the school's Catholic ethos, spiritual development is equally strong. The children regularly raise money for charities in support of those less fortunate than themselves and have an excellent understanding of right and wrong. They respect the different beliefs and values of others and show a good awareness of the community.

Children are developing personal and academic skills that will be valuable to them in adult life and at work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are now outstanding across the school. Areas for improvement identified in the recent past have been rectified through shared training. Teachers are very knowledgeable and have a complete understanding of the subjects they teach and the needs of the children. Work is matched to need and superb teaching now enables learning to be rapid and enjoyable. Across the school, reading and ICT are taught particularly well. To further raise the overall performance in English, teachers are successfully incorporating more opportunities for writing into other subjects.

Imaginative strategies are increasing the rate of progress in mathematics for pupils of all attainment levels, especially in Key Stage 2.

The school is very strongly committed to improving the learning skills of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is innovative and well structured, especially in the new support unit. The progress of these children is tracked meticulously. Strategies for teaching and marking and the use made of the school's assessment procedures have been revised and strengthened. Where the latter are followed meticulously, they contribute to pupils making very good and sometimes outstanding progress, and provide useful information for planning new work. The school is striving to ensure that assessment is used consistently in all classes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Curriculum provision is outstanding. The school is successfully adapting national guidelines to extend and enrich learning opportunities. Teachers link subjects, making learning exciting and meaningful for all children. In this inclusive school, every child really matters. Children are encouraged and enabled to 'do their best' in all curriculum areas. The school is rightly proud of the many awards achieved to recognise its outstanding curriculum. In the Foundation Stage the curriculum is rich and exciting. Provision for cultural education has improved greatly since the last inspection and is now outstanding. French is taught and many international links make significant contributions to the life of the school. Excellent resources and exceptional teaching expertise help pupils learn well in ICT. Pupils use modern technology confidently in many lessons. This motivates them to do well and prepares them effectively for their future. Pupils needing additional support are provided for very well. Children delight in the outstanding range of after-school clubs, visits and visitors that enrich their experiences and their enjoyment of school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The very caring ethos, safe environment and very good relationships across the school reflect the outstanding care, guidance and support given to all children. The partnership of teachers, support staff, parents, the church community and outside agencies ensures that the children's well-being contributes to their overall achievement and personal development. Child protection procedures and all other risk assessments are used efficiently. Provision for children with learning or behaviour difficulties or other disabilities is excellent. There is an understanding that every child matters and learns in different ways. Systems of grouping and setting help children to work to the best of their capabilities.

Whole school systems for assessing and tracking children's progress and attainment are good overall. Children feel well supported in their work and know what levels they are working towards. They know their individual targets and most understand what they need to do in order to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding across the school. The headteacher is highly committed to the school and the wider community. He shares a clear vision of how the school should develop with the deputy headteacher and the teaching and support staff. They believe in the education of the whole child. Parents are involved from when children join the nursery through to Year 6. All staff know the school's strengths and recognise the areas where they might build on established gains in order to raise standards and achievements to a higher level. The programme of monitoring and evaluation shows a positive trend over time. As a result of the headteacher's outstanding leadership, expectations and aspirations are high. The school has gained many awards for high achievement, global citizenship and for promoting an awareness of healthy living.

The established pattern of distributed leadership enables subject co-ordinators to manage their responsibilities very well. They monitor the standards throughout the school and have well-conceived plans for improvements. Staff training is exemplary. Skills of all adults are used to maximum benefit to enrich children's learning experiences.

Finances are managed well. Governors are skilled and experienced and are very aware of their responsibility to hold the school to account. They rejoice in what the senior managers have already achieved and, with their help and support, the school is well placed to achieve the planned improvements.

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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?	1	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	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	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	1	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?	1	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?	1	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	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	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

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To the children of:

St Bernadette's Roman Catholic Primary School

Rising Sun Cottages

Wallsend

Tyne and Wear

NE28 9JW

23 March 2006

Dear Children

Thank you for your help when we inspected your school. Please let everybody know how much we enjoyed sharing your work. Saint Bernadette's is clearly a family school where you are learning and working together very well.

There is so much that is excellent in your school. I especially liked these things:

it is good to see that you get on well with one another in lessons and when playing outside
you have an excellent understanding about healthy living, caring for the environment and helping one another

your work in reading, mathematics, art, sport, music and ICT is particularly good

your teachers care for you extremely well and plan interesting and exciting lessons and activities;
they are helping you to learn very well

the places you visit and the many visitors to the school, such as the teachers from Egypt, the Czech Republic and Germany, all help to give you a better understanding of the wider world

you do well in your tests each year because you come to school every day except when you are ill.

Yours is an outstanding school but a few things could be made even better. We know that Mr Egdell and the other staff have already started to remind you more about your personal targets and want you to remember them in all lessons. They are checking your progress very carefully now, to spot any problems that arise very quickly, so they can help you all to achieve better.

Thank you

Heather Evans and all of the inspection team