



St Bede's Roman Catholic (VA) Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 108715
LEA South Tyneside
Inspection number 278032
Inspection dates 1 November 2005 to 2 November 2005
Reporting inspector Heather Evans

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Claypath Lane
School category	Voluntary aided		South Shields
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Tyne and Wear, NE33 4PG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0191 4560108
Number on roll	241	Fax number	0191 4271694
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr M Wales
Date of previous inspection	1 June 2000	Headteacher	Mrs N Park

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized Catholic primary school in South Shields. Most pupils live close to the school but some come from further away. Attainment on entry is about average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below that in most schools. Almost all of the pupils are white British and very few children come from families where English is not the first language. The new headteacher has been in post since the start of September 2005.

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 and provides good value for money. The inspection team agrees with the school's evaluation of its own effectiveness in most matters. The staff and governors have dealt successfully with the few issues raised in the previous inspection. The headteacher and governors have the imagination, drive and capacity to generate further improvement. Strong links with parents and other agencies contribute to the good care for pupils. Pupils' personal development is good; they enjoy school and their attendance is good.

Good provision in the Foundation Stage enables children to achieve well. Progress and achievement are good across the school. Boys and girls from all backgrounds do equally well. When pupils leave school, standards in English, mathematics and science are all above average and many pupils achieve above what is expected nationally. Writing is the weakest part of the pupils' attainment, and the school is working to improve it. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities undertake work that is carefully matched to their needs and these pupils achieve well. Pupils who learn English as an additional language also achieve well. Teaching is never less than good.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The governors are very aware of what the school does well and have clear plans for building on that success.

What the school should do to improve further

- Implement the agreed plans to raise standards and achievement in writing for all pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards and achievement are good. Children enter the nursery with average levels of achievement. They settle well, develop as independent learners and make good progress.

By the end of Year 2, achievement is good and standards are above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. This good work is continued until the end of Year 6 where standards are above the national average in English, mathematics and science. In mathematics and science the number achieving the higher Level 5 in the statutory tests is above the national average. Skills learnt in mathematics are used effectively in other subjects; so are many of the skills learnt in English, but until recently pupils have had too few opportunities to develop their writing in other areas of the curriculum and their attainment in writing has suffered as a result. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and work together well. Work is challenging and is often difficult but the children respond well to it and say they enjoy learning.

Assessment information is used to set targets that encourage pupils to tackle work with enthusiasm and confidence. Work is tailored to meet the needs of all of the

different groups and individuals, helping pupils of all backgrounds and levels of attainment to achieve well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Support for the pupils' personal development and well-being is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and know that the staff help them learn. Behaviour is consistently good due to the very high expectations of all staff. The strong Christian ethos and the positive values of the school have a beneficial effect on the pupils and how they relate to one another. Pupils feel safe and know that they are cared for. Older pupils look after the younger children and foster friendships through cooperation and sharing.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. Pupils learn about other cultures in their school work and through visits to places of interest. Teachers ensure that pupils know how to lead a healthy lifestyle. The school is involved in many community and church events. Teachers listen to pupils' views and use their ideas to make changes. The school council is used to involve pupils in school improvement. Pupils' understanding of their own academic and social skills prepares them well for the next stage of education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is good overall and teachers show flair and imagination. They have realistically high expectations of what pupils can achieve and pupils are expected to work hard in their lessons. A very good range of methods and resources promotes learning and keeps pupils interested in their work. Lessons go at a good pace and the tasks set are carefully matched to pupils' previous achievement so that, whatever their current attainment, they progress well. Very occasionally, introductions to lessons are too long and some children do not have enough time to finish their tasks. Skilled teaching assistants play an important role by helping pupils to be involved and to make good progress in lessons.

Assessment is good overall. Test results are analysed and pupils' progress is tracked very well. Information gathered helps teachers to plan work effectively. Older pupils have the best understanding of what they need to do to reach agreed targets and this work is now being extended to the younger pupils. Marking is good, particularly in English. Work to remedy the weakness in writing is now the top priority for teachers and pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school judges its curriculum to be satisfactory but inspection evidence shows that it is good. All subjects including information and communication technology are covered well and the provision for extra-curricular opportunities, including sport, singing and making music, is outstanding. The structured provision for literacy and numeracy helps pupils to make good progress and the new emphasis on writing has the potential to improve attainment. The pupils say that they greatly enjoy the very many school clubs; these are all well attended. The school is constantly looking for ways to improve the curriculum. One innovation is the introduction of French lessons.

The well organised curriculum in the nursery and the reception class gives children a positive start and helps them to make good progress. Teachers in all classes now link subjects around a theme, promoting more enjoyment for the pupils and creating opportunities to practise and reinforce skills, including those in writing. The curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to succeed and achieve well in their personal development. The newly built Foundation Stage classrooms are proving to be a very positive asset to the curriculum that can be provided in them.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This is good. Staff are fully committed to promoting pupils' welfare and to helping them develop healthy lifestyles. Pupils say they feel safe and well supported by all of the adults in the school. They say that bullying hardly ever happens and that any unacceptable behaviour is dealt with fairly. From the nursery onwards there is a caring and nurturing atmosphere in which children thrive. Teachers make sure that the needs of pupils who have specific learning difficulties are met very well. The school goes out of its way to work with other agencies to meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils learning English as an additional language are very well supported. Pupils know what they can do and are very clear about what they need to improve. There are strong links with parents, the church and the linked Catholic secondary school. Child protection procedures are secure and risk assessments are carried out rigorously.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good. The high standards seen at the previous inspection have been maintained and the matters for improvement set out in that report have been dealt with.

The way that the staff work together in the process of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is good. The governing body has a good grasp of the school's strengths and areas for further development. The shared monitoring by staff has enabled them to build on good practice, to establish a good curriculum and to set targets for raising pupils' attainment and achievement. The staff work together to promote the Christian

ethos of the school and to recognise each child as an individual. They promote pupils' social, spiritual, academic and creative learning well. Parents hold the school in high regard.

The vision of the new headteacher is reflected in the school's plans for the coming years, so too is the school's evaluation of itself, for example, in the new strategies to improve writing. Staff and pupils are delighted with the new classrooms. Resources are good and are well matched to the curriculum.

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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	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?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	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

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

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St Bede's Roman Catholic VA Primary School
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NE33 4PG
3 November 2005

Dear Children

Thank you for your help when we inspected your school. We enjoyed our visit, especially talking with you. You go to a happy school where you learn and you work together well.

We saw many good things.

You work, learn and play very well together and your success in sports must make you feel very proud.

Your teachers set you interesting work and care for you extremely well.

The governors of your school have been very good at helping to get your new classrooms.

The places you visit and the visitors to the school have helped to make you interested in the wider world.

You do well in your tests because, except when you are ill, you come to school very regularly, and behave well.

There is not much that is wrong with your school. The governors are doing their best to make the field better for you, as you have requested and your teachers are planning ways to help you to improve your writing by making work even more varied and exciting.

Thank you

Heather Evans and the inspection team

Annex B