



St Bonaventure's Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109255
LEA Bristol, City of
Inspection number 278165
Inspection dates 19 October 2005 to 20 October 2005
Reporting inspector Wiola Hola HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Egerton Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Bishopston
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Bristol BS7 8HP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0117 9247212
Number on roll	344	Fax number	0117 9428127
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Tony Nelson
Date of previous inspection	27 November 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Lucille Charles

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 19 October 2005 - 20 October 2005	Inspection number 278165
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

St Bonaventure's Catholic Primary School is situated in central Bristol. It is larger than average with 14 classes. Three-quarters of pupils are White British and the rest are White European or from other minority ethnic backgrounds. A few pupils speak English as an additional language. Pupils' circumstances are varied but generally favourable. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is low compared with most schools as is the percentage of pupils with special educational needs. The proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school is lower than in most schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school that provides sound value for money. The school sees itself as a good school. Although it has some strengths, inspectors do not agree with the school's view in all respects because some school judgements are overgenerous. Inspectors agree that pupils' personal development is good. Pupils enjoy being at the school and behave with courtesy to each other, staff and visitors. Staff take great care over pupils' well-being. Teaching is satisfactory but does not include enough of higher quality. There is some good extra curricular provision. The Foundation Stage (in the reception classes) is a strength of the school; here children make a good start in their learning and achieve well. Experienced members of staff establish clear daily routines in reception classes, plan a wide range of interesting activities and support children's needs well.

Pupils have above average attainment when they start school and make satisfactory progress. The rate of progress now is not as good as it was in recent years. Nevertheless, pupils leave with above average attainment and they achieve particularly well in science. The school is aware that standards have slipped, particularly in writing for able pupils in Years 1 and 2. It is putting into place measures that are aimed to restore good progress; these have not yet had an impact on standards.

Leadership and management are satisfactory and the school shows that it has the capacity to improve. Improvement since the last inspection has been adequate and, until recently, high standards were maintained. Care is taken to ensure a positive climate for teaching and learning. Some aspects of self-evaluation lack rigour; staff and governors are seeking to strengthen these.

What the school should do to improve further

- raise standards in Years 1 and 2; ensure that pupils' skills in writing are developed much faster and that the more able pupils reach the high standards of which they are capable
- improve self-evaluation in order to increase the rate of pupils' progress; make better use of information about pupils' attainment to set suitably challenging targets
- raise the overall quality of teaching so that more of it is good or better.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are above average overall but this represents satisfactory achievement given pupils' above average starting points. Pupils with special educational needs or with English as a second language make similar satisfactory progress to their peers.

Most pupils make good progress in the Foundation Stage. They meet the levels expected for their age, with many exceeding them. They make especially good progress in speaking and listening, and develop good relationships with each other and members of staff. Writing is a comparative weakness, with several pupils lacking confidence when writing unaided.

Until last year, standards for pupils in Years 1 and 2 were well above average and pupils made good progress. Standards dropped markedly in 2005, due in part to staffing difficulties, to broadly average overall, but with too few pupils reaching the higher levels of which they were capable. Standards have been extremely high in mathematics and, in 2005, this was still the strongest subject with nearly all pupils reaching the nationally expected level. Standards in writing are a relative weakness for these younger pupils.

Standards for pupils in Years 3 to 6 are above average. They have been well above average in previous years. Science is the strongest of the three core subjects. The 2005 targets for end of Year 6 tests were not met. The school is reasonably confident the current Year 6 pupils will meet their targets; work and records seen by inspectors early in the year confirm this view.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are confident, enjoy school and get on well together. They are articulate and behave very sensibly. They work hard, taking pride in their work and happily celebrate each other's successes. Attendance is satisfactory, but some pupils do not always arrive punctually. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. From an early age, pupils take responsibility willingly, setting and keeping their own class rules, for example. An active school council makes a good contribution to school life and has recently helped to improve facilities in the playground. Pupils show a good concern for the welfare and well-being of others by raising funds for charities.

Pupils can explain why they need to eat healthy foods and take exercise and how this will help them to learn and grow better. They enjoy sports lessons and clubs. Pupils participated enthusiastically in a recent 'walk to school' day. They take an active role in the local community and understand what they can do to improve the environment. These activities, together with pupils' well developed social skills, give them a suitable grounding for the world of work in the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory which leads to the pupils making satisfactory progress. Some lessons seen were good, but there are not enough of these, particularly in Years 1 and 2. The school's own assessment of teaching is that it is good but this is not based closely enough on clearly understood and shared criteria; staff need to be helped in making sharper evaluations of teaching.

Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are good. Members of staff are welcoming and friendly, have high expectations for behaviour and promote the learning of basic skills effectively. Support is carefully tailored to the pupils' individual needs.

In Years 1 to 6, teachers fulfil the school's expectations of making pupils aware of their targets for learning. Teachers have confident subject knowledge and maintain a good working atmosphere. They also routinely conduct good lesson summaries so that pupils are clear about what has been achieved; pupils are able to make their own assessment about how well they have done. Sometimes, however, the act of checking progress towards targets is done mechanically by teachers without examining closely whether the targets are indeed the right ones in relation to pupils' capabilities; some targets are not demanding enough. In the best lessons, pupils show real enjoyment because teaching is animated and uses interesting resources. Where lessons are satisfactory, adequate learning occurs but without any great spirit of enquiry, discovery or evident satisfaction; sometimes pupils' attention drifts and pace slackens.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

There is a good curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage, based on capturing and extending their specific interests. The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 mainly meets the needs and interests of pupils but does not always build effectively on their previous learning, especially in the move from the reception classes to Year 1 and sometimes elsewhere. Older pupils benefit from regular French lessons which give them a good start when they move to secondary school. Some special 'activity weeks' in subjects such as art and design have a good impact on learning and bring topics to life.

Pupils' personal development is supported very effectively. Teachers make school enjoyable by providing a wide range of activities outside lessons that cater well for differing needs. There is a good range of visits and visitors and teachers make good use of the local area to support learning and to help pupils to contribute to the community.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Members of staff are caring and support pupils' personal development well. They make the school a safe and welcoming place where pupils can gain confidence and learn about healthy lifestyles. There are clearly defined procedures for supporting pupils' medical needs and identifying and supporting those who are vulnerable.

Procedures for monitoring the learning of pupils in the reception year are thorough. In Years 1 to 6, whilst the school sets individual targets, they are based on the level each pupil reached at the end of the previous year; this system does not ensure that all pupils reach the levels of which they are capable. Monitoring of progress has been improved this year, so that pupils who make insufficient progress during a year can be identified and supported sooner. Some good use is now being made of recent Year 2 test results, for example, to provide extra learning programmes for specific pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall because senior managers and governors are now engaged in moving the school forward quickly to restore standards to their previously high levels. Recent initiatives such as the improved systems for monitoring and speeding up pupils' progress are just beginning to have a positive effect.

A strong feature of the headteacher's leadership is the good level of pastoral care offered to all members of the school community. The school works effectively to include pupils who have difficulties in learning or with maintaining good behaviour; there have been no exclusions. Liaison with parents is good. Most parents have positive views although some are concerned about slow progress in Years 1 and 2. The headteacher is supported well by a deputy headteacher who, alongside other key members of staff, is acting as a catalyst in the drive to improve achievement. Nevertheless, there are important weaknesses in how well the school judges its effectiveness. Monitoring lacks rigour. Some, but not enough, use is made of test results and other information to improve systematically teaching and learning, for example. The school's plans identify correctly areas of weakness but are not specific enough about how improvement is to be ensured. Governors fulfil statutory duties and are supportive. They are insufficiently involved in evaluating school effectiveness but are seeking to improve this.

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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?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	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	3	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	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	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	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?	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	4	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	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

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

As you know, we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and would like to thank you for all the help that you gave us. We were impressed with your friendliness and politeness, with how well you behave, and the care you take of one another. We are pleased that you like your school and that you enjoy learning.

What we think your school does well:

- you are looked after very well by the adults who work in your school
- the school provides a good number of interesting extra clubs and activities
- the children in the reception classes are helped to settle in very well and are given many interesting activities so they learn quickly
- the school helps you to understand how important it is to eat healthily and take exercise in order to learn and grow well
- the school council works well and gives you a chance to have your say about what can be improved.

What we have asked the school to do now to improve:

- the pupils in Years 1 and 2 need to make faster progress in their writing and some of them should do harder work
- the teachers need to make sure everyone makes good progress by keeping a closer eye on what each of you has learned and what you are capable of learning
- we saw some good teaching in your school and feel that there should be more of it.

We know everyone in the school is determined to make it even better. You can help by making sure that you all arrive on time so that lessons can start quickly.