



St Edmund Campion Catholic Primary School, Maidenhead

Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 110030
Local Authority Windsor and Maidenhead
Inspection number 278351
Inspection date 12 December 2006
Reporting inspector Steven Hill

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Altwood Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Maidenhead
Age range of pupils	5–11		SL6 4PX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01628 620183
Number on roll (school)	263	Fax number	01628 624010
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Anne Marie Impey
		Headteacher	Mrs Patricia Opalko
Date of previous school inspection	27 November 2000		

Age group	Inspection date	Inspection number
5–11	12 December 2006	278351

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is slightly larger than the average primary school. The large majority of pupils are of White British origin with other pupils coming from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is average. Very few pupils have a home language other than English, and hardly any are at early stages of learning English. Very few pupils are entitled to free school meals. There are currently nine mixed aged classes, and no children in the Foundation Stage, because of the local authority's admission arrangements. As a result, two-thirds of pupils spend just two terms in the Reception class, with the other third going straight into Year 1. Children's attainment when they start school varies, but is above average overall.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management have made St Edmund Campion a good school that has outstanding pastoral provision. The very positive learning environment helps pupils to make good progress academically, and their personal development and well-being are outstanding. Systems for pupils' care, support and guidance are excellent.

The Foundation Stage provision is well organised for those children who are able to spend time in the Reception class, and records show that they achieve well.

Pupils achieve well throughout the school because of good teaching and learning, and thorough systems to track their individual progress. Standards are consistently high in English, mathematics and science. Standards are equally high in some other subjects, notably history and geography. Pupils do particularly well in reading. Some older pupils who find mathematics difficult do not do as well in this subject as they do in English. The school has identified that this is because they lack confidence and need to make good some 'gaps' in their basic mathematical knowledge. A programme to address this has been put in place.

Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and work hard to make lessons interesting. Together with an exciting and wide-ranging curriculum, this ensures that pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons and work hard. Consistently high expectations throughout the school ensure that pupils behave very well, and behaviour is excellent in lessons. Pupils have very good collaborative skills because teachers give them many well-planned opportunities to work together. A very wide range of enrichment activities contributes considerably to pupils' standards and enjoyment. Pupils get on very well together, and take on a wide range of responsibilities enthusiastically. By the end of the school, they are confident learners, with thoughtful and caring attitudes towards others. They are developing a very good understanding of environmental issues, greatly helped by the school's involvement in the 'Learning for Sustainability' project. Very effective partnerships with other schools, with parents and the community all support the school's good provision.

The work of the school is monitored very thoroughly by senior management, under the very strong leadership of the headteacher. Feedback to colleagues after observations of lessons has helped improve the quality of teaching. Careful tracking of the progress made by individuals helps identify any who are falling behind, and the school intervenes well to ensure that all make good progress. The work of a large number of skilled teaching assistants contributes very effectively to this. The school currently lacks an effective computer-based system to track the progress of each year group across the school, and is planning to introduce this to give an even more detailed overview of the strengths and weaknesses in progress. The work of the subject coordinators is very effective in supporting teaching and learning, and contributes well to the excellent curriculum.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics at Key Stage 2, particularly by improving the achievement and confidence of pupils who have struggled with the subject in the past
- Introduce a system to give a clearer overview of the progress of different groups as they go through the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Records show that children make good progress in the Reception class and standards are above national expectations when pupils start in Year 1. Standards are significantly above average throughout the school, as shown by consistently good results in national assessments at the ages of seven and eleven. The achievement of boys, which had previously lagged behind, is now broadly similar to that of girls following effective work to improve this. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities do well, in large part because of the very effective help they receive from teaching assistants.

Standards are very high in reading, with all eleven-year-olds reaching the expected standards in 2006, and three quarters exceeding them. Standards in mathematics, while above average, are not as high, because of a 'tail' of pupils who do not reach the expected level. The school has started to use a national programme, known as 'Wave 3', to address the needs of these pupils. They are already showing improved confidence in mathematics and are starting to fill in gaps in their previous knowledge.

The wide and interesting curriculum is raising standards in other subjects, with very good quality work seen in history and geography, for example. The singing of older pupils in a Christmas performance was also of a high standard.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They are very well behaved and have extremely positive attitudes to learning. They develop into well-rounded, reflective and positive young people, who are sensible, confident and very caring of others. Pupils are well-mannered, friendly and have a very good understanding of moral issues, including those related to the environment. They make a very positive contribution to the school community and take on responsibilities, such as peer mediation or school council membership, conscientiously and enthusiastically. They are also very well involved in the local community and the Parish. They thoroughly enjoy school, in lessons, at play and in the wide range of enrichment activities. Their attendance is very good. Pupils' good academic achievement, positive attitudes and strong collaborative skills stand them in very good stead for their future lives. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles, and generally try to put this into practice. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, feel safe in school, and are

confident that staff quickly sort out any problems. Older pupils really appreciate that they are trusted by the staff, and are keen to meet their teachers' expectations.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Most teaching is good. A significant proportion of lessons are outstanding and a small minority are satisfactory. The quality of teaching has been maintained despite recent significant changes in staff and a large proportion of relatively inexperienced teachers.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. Pupils respond positively, working hard, behaving extremely well and taking a pride in their accomplishments. Teachers make good use of the school's assessment information to plan different work for pupils of different abilities. This usually ensures that brighter pupils are challenged, and that pupils who find work difficult are able to cope well. Occasionally, in otherwise satisfactory lessons, the work is too hard or too easy for some pupils, and then their progress slows. Teachers develop pupils' speaking, listening and thinking very effectively through frequent opportunities for them to clarify their understanding by discussing their ideas in pairs.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The excellent curriculum provides strongly for the core skills of English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). The ICT curriculum has improved considerably since the last inspection. This basic provision is paralleled by high quality provision in the wider curriculum, with some very effective work going on in geography and environmental studies, for example. From Year 3 upwards, pupils start to learn Spanish and Italian. All pupils have the chance to learn the recorder and, at the last count, about a fifth of the school were learning another instrument. The curriculum for personal, social and health issues is also strong and supports pupils' excellent personal development. The school has just gained the national 'Healthy School' status because of its very good provision. There is an extremely wide range of extra-curricular activities, including sports, which pupils enjoy. Asked to say what clubs were available, pupils in Year 6 gave a long list before one of them said 'There are millions of them!' Pupils really appreciate the wide range of other activities that enhance the curriculum, such as visitors and trips out. The residential trip for the older pupils is particularly popular, supporting academic and social skills. Pupils told the inspector that, as well as learning about geography, they got to know each other better 'on the inside'.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school's outstanding pastoral care for pupils leads to their excellent social and moral development. There is strong encouragement for pupils to think of others and

to be reflective. An emphasis on working together is very successful in promoting teamwork and positive relationship. Staff have high expectations of pupils in terms of taking responsibilities and they give them many opportunities. Pupils have a say in the life of the school through the school council, and staff respond positively to their suggestions. The system of 'peer mediation', where older pupils help others to sort out their problems and arguments, is very successful. The extensive systems to celebrate and reward achievement or effort are very much valued by pupils.

There are excellent systems to track the attainment and progress of individuals, and the school responds positively to ensure they do well. An extensive range of intervention strategies are used successfully to support any pupils who might fall behind, including some that are tailor-made to the needs of the individual. Similarly, the school identifies particularly bright pupils and ensures they are given challenging and interesting work. At the moment, the school lacks an efficient system to give an overview of the performance of the pupils in each year group, and plans to introduce an ICT based system for this.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides very clear leadership to an effective staff team. The management of pastoral care and support is outstanding, leading to the strengths in personal development. Excellent self-evaluation ensures a clear overview of strengths and weaknesses. Careful monitoring of standards, by sampling pupils' work and analysing the extensive assessment information, as well as very thorough systems to monitor lessons, are at the heart of this. The school reacts promptly to address any issues that arise. Despite many changes of teaching staff in the last few years, the support for colleagues has maintained good teaching and achievement throughout the school. The feedback and support given to relatively inexperienced teachers has meant rapid progress in their skills.

Subject coordinators now play a much bigger role than at the last inspection in driving up standards and making exciting innovations in the curriculum. The employment of large numbers of support staff, and the training given to them, means that they are very effective in supporting pupils' learning. Governors are very well informed about the school and work hard to provide support and to challenge professional colleagues in their role as 'critical friend'. The improvements since the last inspection show the school is well placed to improve further.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for all your help when I visited your school. I really enjoyed my day, particularly watching you working in lessons, and talking to you. I was sorry that I didn't have time to watch the performance by pupils in Years 5 and 6, but I listened to some of the singing and thought it was very good.

You told me that you think your school is good. I agree, and I could see why you enjoy it so much. I was particularly impressed by how sensible, friendly and well behaved you are, and how well you get on with each other. You are also good at working in teams and you are very conscientious when you have particular responsibilities, such as peer-mediators or school councillors.

You work hard and reach high standards, especially in reading. Your work in geography and history is very good too. Some of you find mathematics a bit puzzling and don't do quite so well in this, and your teachers are going to find new ways to help you to enjoy it more, and do better. You make good progress because your teachers are good at explaining things to you. You have a really wide range of interesting things to do in lessons, and plenty of clubs, visitors and trips out to make learning exciting.

The adults look after you all extremely well. They keep a very careful eye on how you are getting on, and try hard to make sure you have work that is just right for you. We have agreed that they will try to keep an even closer check on how everyone is doing in future, by using some new ICT systems. The headteacher, the other staff and the governors organise the school very well, and are always trying to find ways of making it better. You can help by carrying on working hard, especially with mathematics, even when it is not your favourite subject.

I hope you all keep on enjoying school and doing so well.

Best wishes,

Steven Hill

Lead Inspector