



# St Cuthbert's RC Primary School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 111692  
**LEA** Hartlepool  
**Inspection number** 278749  
**Inspection dates** 11 January 2006 to 12 January 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs Heather Evans

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Stratford Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Hartlepool
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		TS25 5AJ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01429 275040
<b>Number on roll</b>	274	<b>Fax number</b>	01429 275450
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Vincent Magee
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 October 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Mary Frain

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 11 January 2006 - 12 January 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 278749
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This is a larger than average sized Catholic Primary school in a deprived area of Hartlepool. Most of the pupils live close to the school but some are from more distant parts of the parish. In most years children's attainment on entry to the nursery is below that which is typical for children of the same age. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is similar to that in most schools as is the proportion claiming an entitlement to free school meals. Almost all of the pupils are white British. Very few children come from families where English is not the language of the home.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

St Cuthbert's is a good school and is improving rapidly. The management team's judgements about where strengths lie and where there is still work to be done are accurate. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good, but the provision for outdoor play is inadequate. Children settle well and, from their low starting points, they make good progress. Standards are above average overall and the pupils achieve well throughout the school. The work to raise standards in English, especially to lift the achievement of boys in writing, has had a positive impact. Teachers are now working to increase pupils' enjoyment of reading. Teaching is consistently good across the school and the curriculum captures the pupils' interests. The pupils' personal development is good and the school ensures that pupils receive good levels of care, support and guidance. Pupils are eager to manage their own learning and know what they need to do to achieve their personal targets. Finances are well managed and the school provides good value for money. Leadership is good and the work to improve the quality of education is organised very effectively. The school is well placed to carry through its plans to ensure that all of the pupils do as well as they can.

not applicable

### What the school should do to improve further

The following points are identified in the school development plan as part of the drive to raise standards and extend pupils' achievement. The school should:

- improve the outdoor provision for the Foundation Stage as a matter of urgency
- pursue the plans to increase pupils' enjoyment of reading.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Throughout the school pupils from all backgrounds achieve well. The standards attained by pupils by the end of Years 2 and 6 are above average overall, and also above average in English, mathematics and science. At the beginning of the Foundation Stage, when pupils start school, attainment is below average. The children in the nursery and reception class make good progress and by the end of their reception year most have reached the standards expected for children of their age.

Elsewhere in the school pupils work hard and, because the teaching is good, they make good progress and achieve the challenging targets set for them. Many pupils exceeded nationally expected levels in statutory tests in 2005. Standards have risen in English as a result of targeted teaching and effective learning. This improvement is being maintained and most pupils are expected to achieve national standards and many are expected to gain the higher levels. The school rightly identified that boys needed to make better progress and has put strategies in place that are already improving their

achievement. Whilst reading standards are good, the school is now targeting improving the pupils' enjoyment of reading for both boys and girls.

Pupils who have learning difficulties and the small number who learn English as an additional language also make good progress. This is because teachers understand their needs and have improved plans for helping them. Teaching assistants have benefited from specialised training and use their skills to work well with teachers and provide valuable support for the pupils.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

The pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Attendance is good and pupils enjoy coming to school. They have positive attitudes to work and play. They have good relationships with adults and one another and know that teachers and assistants do the best they can to help them learn. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. Pupils are introduced to a range of cultures through work in different areas of the curriculum; for example, through visitors to the school, art and design, music and visits to places of worship. Behaviour is consistently good owing to very high expectations of all staff. The strong Christian ethos and the positive values of the school have a positive effect on pupils. Pupils say that they feel safe and know that they are well cared for.

Staff ensure that all 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. This process is well developed and the school council has a strong voice in school activities. Pupils willingly accept responsibilities and show initiative such as in the way they raise funds for charities. Pupils learn a good range of academic and social skills through links with other groups.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. As a result of consistently good teaching, pupils learn well and this is having a positive effect on standards and achievement.

Teachers plan together thoroughly and expect all pupils to do their best and to succeed. In all classes, including those with mixed age groups, work is matched carefully to pupils' earlier achievements. Probing questions encourage pupils to concentrate and make them think of clear well organised sentences for their responses. Pupils work independently and collaboratively on interesting and demanding tasks. Teachers require all written work to be presented to high standards. Learning is enjoyable and lessons move at a fast pace. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used effectively to increase the rate of learning. Progress towards precise individual targets is evaluated extremely well and is used to inform planning in all subjects. Marking is thorough and shows pupils how to improve. In a minority of lessons, pupils spend too much time

sitting and listening at the expense of time to undertake practical activities and think for themselves.

Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are identified early and have good support in lessons. Most succeed very well and feel justly proud of their achievements. At the end of lessons all pupils are encouraged to listen to what others have done. They praise what they like and make sensible suggestions as to what might be improved.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. It provides a wide range of learning opportunities, which go beyond meeting statutory requirements. Teachers plan to meet the differing needs of pupils and work hard to provide a range of activities to captivate pupils' interest. For example, in Years 5 and 6 very effective links were made between learning about 'keeping healthy' in science and 'multi-media' in ICT. This greatly improved pupils' understanding and skills. The curriculum is enriched by visits to places such as museums and by music and sporting activities. Pupils feel that their out-of-school history visits really 'bring history to life'. After-school activities are popular and are well attended, enabling pupils to successfully improve their sporting, creative and musical skills. A safe and healthy lifestyle is promoted well. Pupils are well prepared to make reasoned decisions about their safety and health. These activities provide interest and enjoyment and make a significant contribution to developing positive attitudes to work. While the curriculum for the Foundation Stage is good overall, the inadequacy of the outdoor area limits the scope of the children's learning.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are safe and secure at school. The care, guidance and support are good, although procedures are new and, as yet, not fully embedded in the work of the school. Staff know the pupils well and support their personal development through a good range of strategies such as 'talking and listening partners'. The tracking of pupils' academic progress is good with improved systems for recording data and providing information to teachers and pupils. This is used effectively to guide the organisation of teaching and learning and to inform pupils of their progress.

Links with outside agencies enable pupils' needs to be identified early and tackled effectively.

Parents are very pleased with the support given to their children. Health and safety routines, risk assessments and child protection procedures operate successfully.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The management team is relatively new and cautiously judges leadership and management to be satisfactory. In fact, both are good and some elements are

outstanding. The headteacher has empowered subject leaders to drive up standards and increase personal pride in achievement across the school. Consequently, pupils' achievement has improved.

All aspects of school life have been reviewed and a rigorous training programme has enabled skills to be shared by the teaching and support staff. Staff training is helping to improve the quality of education but there is still a little way to go to implement planned changes consistently throughout the school.

Pupils explain how they feel valued and how their ideas are listened to by teachers. The work to build strong relationships with the welfare staff has helped to build an even stronger community spirit. Parents are happy with the way the school has been improved. They are pleased that teachers are approachable and that they respond to their needs, offering advice as to how they can help their children at home.

The governing body fulfils its statutory duties and plays a full part in guiding the school forward by working in harmony with the senior management team. Governors are well-informed and training has lifted their levels of expertise. The considerable balance of funds from previous years has been spent wisely on staff training, resources, and improvements to the accommodation.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	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	2	NA

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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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13 January 2006

Dear Pupils,

Thank you for your help when we inspected your school. Please let everybody know how much we enjoyed our visit. It is a happy place where you are working together successfully and are all learning well.

There are many good things in your clean, bright school.

You work and learn well in every class. It is good to see that you get on well with one another. Your work is good in many subjects. Your art and the work of the steel band make life exciting.

Your teachers plan good lessons with the teaching assistants. They are helping you all to achieve well.

The governors of your school have been good at helping to get your new library ready and have bought new furniture for many of the classrooms.

The places you visit and visitors to the school all help to make your work more interesting. We loved hearing about your archaeological dig.

You do well in your test results because you come to school except when you are ill. You all behave well in lessons and when playing outside.

There are no important things wrong with your school but there are one or two things that could make it better and we are sure that Miss Frain and the other staff and governors will work hard to do these.

The children in the nursery and the reception class need a better place to play and learn outside the classrooms with a covered area for when it rains.

Most of you read well but some of you say that you do not always enjoy books. Your teachers are already looking for different ways to help you enjoy books more. Let them know which books you like best.

Thank you for your smiles and all your helpfulness.

Heather Evans and the inspection team