



Stourport-upon-Severn, St Wulstan's Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116915
LEA Worcestershire
Inspection number 279946
Inspection dates 8 November 2005 to 9 November 2005
Reporting inspector Hazel Callaghan RISP

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Elmfield Walk
School category	Voluntary aided		Stagborough Way
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Stourport-on-Severn, Worcestershire DY13 8TX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01299 877808
Number on roll	195	Fax number	01299 878307
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Father John Cross
Date of previous inspection	7 February 2000	Headteacher	Mr Christian Wilkins

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Wulstan's Roman Catholic Primary is an average-sized school. It admits children from the immediate area and across the Roman Catholic diocese. Most pupils are of White British descent with a small number of pupils from minority ethnic groups. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school fluctuates but is broadly average, except in language skills, which is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning or physical disabilities is broadly average. There have been very few changes in the staff since the previous inspection, with the exception of a new headteacher who was appointed two years ago and a new Reception teacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

St Wulstan's provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Achievement is satisfactory and standards are typically above average at the end of school. The relatively new headteacher is leading a number of good strategies that are supporting better teaching and improving pupils' learning. This is helping to quicken progress. However, some initiatives have only recently been introduced and are not yet showing impact on overall achievement. Teaching is satisfactory overall. There is good practice through the school but it is not consistent, especially in mathematics and in writing. Management systems are satisfactory, but procedures for evaluating developments are not yet rigorous enough to ensure consistent progress is made.

Good provision helps children in the Reception class make a successful start to their education. The Catholic ethos of the school is strong and underpins good quality care and support for pupils and, in consequence, there is good personal development. Partnerships with parents are good and they are extremely supportive of the school. Good use of outside agencies is made to enhance and further extend pupils' successful learning and the additional activities, such as those in music and sport, are good. Satisfactory progress has been made since the previous inspection. The school has secure capacity to improve in all aspects of its work. It provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- make sure that teaching enables consistently good progress for all pupils in writing and mathematics
- ensure that challenging work is set for more able pupils in mathematics
- develop more rigorous strategies for evaluating the work of the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children make an effective start to their education in the Reception class. They make good progress and achieve standards that are usually above average by the time they move into Year 1. Achievement in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory overall, as reflected in the above average standards seen at the end of Year 6. There are strengths in pupils' work in both science and in reading, and in these aspects standards are usually well above average through the school. The school has correctly identified the need to improve pupils' learning in writing and mathematics and a satisfactory range of strategies are being employed, but it is too soon for them to have had an impact on standards. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are well supported and many make good progress towards the targets set for them in their individual educational plans. More able pupils achieve well in both science and reading but not in mathematics and should be doing better. Standards at the previous inspection were above average in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and provision for swimming and music was also strong. The school's self-evaluation indicates that the strengths in music and sport have been effectively maintained. Progress in developing pupils' skills

in ICT, however, slowed after the previous inspection because the provision did not sufficiently keep abreast of national trends and expectations. The school has improved the equipment and resources for ICT in the last two years and this is beginning to improve standards once more so they are now broadly in line with those expected.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also good with particular strengths in spiritual, moral and social development. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their actions regularly and to consider the needs of others. Year 6 pupils, in particular, are given many opportunities to show initiative, take responsibility and develop leadership skills. Pupils organise their own fund raising schemes for charity. The Tsunami Appeal and Cafod have both benefited from this enterprising spirit and sense of community. Older pupils are encouraged to suggest ways of making the school even better. Sports captains, for example, recommended the equipment that should be bought for use at lunchtime. These varied skills effectively support pupils' ability to face future challenges.

Pupils enjoy coming to school, their behaviour is good and they attend regularly. Pupils show positive attitudes to their lessons and are keen to learn. A feature of inspectors' discussions with pupils was their enthusiasm both for their lessons and the range of additional activities that the school offers them. Pupils have good awareness of the need for keeping safe and healthy living. Many said they had made changes to what they eat as the result of the school's healthy eating initiative. The pupils treat each other well, feel safe and agree that there is little bullying. They say that adults are quick to sort out any problems that do occur.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. There are pockets of good practice in both English and mathematics but these are not widespread enough to ensure pupils make good progress. There is a positive focus on improving the quality of teaching. Staff have participated in additional professional training and effective strategies to promote pupils' better learning are now clearly evident. For example, teachers are using effective strategies to stimulate children's imagination and extended vocabulary in writing. In most classes, the teaching assistants work well with the class teachers and provide good levels of support for pupils. This was well illustrated in the Reception class and in classes where there are pupils with significant learning difficulties. Teachers monitor pupils' work and progress satisfactorily, but are not always sufficiently clear about how to effectively challenge more able pupils, especially in mathematics. Teachers' marking often gives pupils a good understanding of how they can improve

and older pupils say they know what to do to make their work better. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and children make good progress in all aspects of their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum has improved since the last inspection. It is now satisfactorily broad and balanced. Successful improvements have been made in the provision for ICT since the new headteacher took up post with effective decisions being made on the purchase of new equipment. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good and activities effectively stimulate children's learning in all aspects of the curriculum.

Provision to support the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities has improved and is beginning to have a positive impact on their progress and achievement. The school has correctly identified that higher attaining pupils are not always challenged enough in mathematics and work has begun on addressing this issue. The need to make a more coordinated provision for pupils who are gifted and talented has been recognised but not yet addressed.

Arrangements to promote the pupils' safety and healthy living are good. The school provides a wide range of additional activities that enrich pupils' learning. Music and sport are both strengths of this provision. In addition, a good number of visits and visitors further enhance pupils' learning experiences. The personal and social development of pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 is considerably extended by residential visits. Pupils are generally prepared well for their future education.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school ethos strongly promotes pupils' care and welfare and it has worked successfully to provide a safe environment where pupils are happy and well cared for. The guidance and support offered to pupils with physical or learning difficulties has improved through the intervention of the headteacher in the role of special educational needs coordinator. Outside agencies are used well to provide additional expertise and guidance. Arrangements to help pupils of all abilities to understand how they can improve academically are satisfactory, but inconsistent. A more structured system of targets for future learning is being introduced so pupils have a better understanding of how to improve their work.

Child protection arrangements are thorough. The school works closely with parents in developing pupils' good eating habits and implementing a successful travel plan. The 'Walking Bus' scheme for pupils has encouraged many to walk to school in safety. There are good links with local secondary schools to ensure a smooth transition for Year 6.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Significant improvements in the quality of education are being made under the good leadership of the new headteacher but many initiatives have only recently been introduced and are not yet having an impact on raising pupils' achievement. The headteacher has accurately identified the school's strengths and the areas in need of improvement. Systems for monitoring pupils' standards and progress are fairly new and have provided the headteacher with an overview of pupils attainment and progress. This year, there are clear expectations for the amount of progress pupils should make in a year so that teachers and pupils recognise what is required of them to ensure standards rise.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher work together well and have successfully established a united team that is seeking to improve its work. The ethos of the school is strong and this ensures good quality care and support for pupils; in consequence, their personal development is good.

Subject co ordinators have clear roles and responsibilities and are satisfactorily involved in monitoring pupils' work and standards in their subjects. Management systems have improved and are satisfactory. The school improvement plan provides an effective tool for guiding future developments but those initiatives already in place are not rigorously monitored to ensure consistent progress is made. Governors are very supportive and are developing as challenging and evaluative managers of the school.

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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?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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	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

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?	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?	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	3	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

St Wulstan's Roman Catholic Primary school Elmfiel Walk Stagborough Way
Stourport-upon-Severn Worcestershire DY13 8TX

10 November 2005

Dear Children

I am writing to say thank you for making us feel welcome in your school and for helping us with our questions. We really enjoyed chatting to you and found everything you said very interesting. I thought you would like to know what we found out about you and the school.

What we liked about the school:

- you are happy at school and enjoy your lessons
- you behave sensibly and are kind to each other; we think you try hard to do well in your work
- you are given lots of opportunities to take responsibility and you do it well
- the teachers look after you well and help you to be healthy and safe
- there are interesting clubs for you to enjoy after school and visits make your lessons more interesting.

What we have asked the school to do:

- teachers should make sure you all make good progress in your writing and in mathematics
- Mr Wilkins and the teachers should find more ways of judging how well the school is doing.

Thank you for helping us find out about your school.

Best wishes

Mrs Hazel Callaghan Lead Inspector