



St Benet's Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124778
LEA SUFFOLK LEA
Inspection number 281801
Inspection dates 3 May 2006 to 4 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. Godfrey Bancroft LI

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

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|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | Ringsfield Road |
| School category | Voluntary aided | | NR34 9PQ |
| Age range of pupils | 5 to 11 | | |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01502 712012 |
| Number on roll | 101 | Fax number | 01502 710902 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair of governors | Mr.Chris Scott |
| Date of previous inspection | 7 June 2004 | Headteacher | Mrs. Kim Payne |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average primary school. The socio-economic circumstances of the community are average, although the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and no pupils who speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities is average. The school currently has an acting headteacher. A new headteacher has been appointed to start in September 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St Benet's Catholic Primary is a good school. It judges its overall effectiveness as satisfactory at present, but the inspection confirms it is better than that. Pupils of all abilities, including those who have learning difficulties and disabilities, achieve well and make good progress. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good and they achieve well, reaching standards that are above those expected. Standards at the end of Year 2 are average. By the end of Year 6 standards are above average. Pupils behave well and have good attitudes to their work. Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is satisfactory and the school provides a good range of additional activities. The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are good. This ensures they are safe and helps them to become increasingly confident learners. Leadership and management are good. The good leadership of the headteacher is the key reason for the school's improvement and for the good standards that pupils achieve.

Governance is satisfactory. Some of the measures to ensure that governors are fully informed about the work of the school and to help them to evaluate the quality of provision are recent introductions and not yet embedded in their practice. Parents' and carers' views of the school are generally positive. However, some parents feel that not enough is yet done to seek their views or take account of their suggestions and concerns and the inspection agrees. The school's previous designation, as having serious weaknesses, no longer applies. Since the time of its last inspection the school has gone from strength to strength. It has addressed all the issues identified for improvement successfully. The school's capacity to maintain its improvement is good and it provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that governors embed within their practice the measures introduced for them to be fully informed about the work of the school and to evaluate the quality of provision. - Make sure that arrangements are in place to seek the views of parents and carers and to take account of their suggestions and concerns.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Attainment on entry is broadly average. Children in the Reception class make good progress. By the end of their Reception year, many children attain standards that exceed those expected for their age, especially in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. In Years 1 to 6, pupils of all abilities, including those who have learning difficulties and disabilities, achieve well and make good progress. Year-on-year standards vary because of the relatively small numbers of pupils in each year group. Standards at the end of Year 2 are currently average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. Over the last five years standards at the end of Year 2 have improved steadily. By the end of Year 6 standards in English, mathematics and science are above average. Over

the last two years, in relation to their prior attainment, pupils in Year 6 have made very good progress and standards have improved significantly, so that targets have been exceeded. Pupils' speaking and listening abilities are developed very effectively. Recent improvements are enabling pupils to apply the skills of information and communication technology (ICT) well in many subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 behave well in lessons and around the school. They also have good attitudes to their work. Attendance is above average. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Assemblies, singing practices and the school's strong Catholic ethos contribute effectively to pupils' spiritual development. Pupils are thoughtful and reflective. They clearly understand the difference between right and wrong. They also play and work together very well. The school has responded effectively to the 'Every Child Matters' national initiative. Pupils enjoy learning. They are knowledgeable about how to eat healthily and understand the importance of taking regular exercise. They know how to keep safe, both in and out of school. Pupils make a positive contribution to their community. They are eager to help around the school and to take responsibility. They are sympathetic and sensitive to the needs of those less fortunate. This is typified by the support they provide for children attending a school in Chamalale, Congo. Pupils acquire the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT well. This is helping to ensure that they are well placed to develop their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly and meet the needs of the full range of ages and abilities in each class effectively. What pupils are expected to learn is explained clearly and teachers often give pupils carefully planned individual targets. Pupils respond by applying themselves well and using the basic skills of literacy and numeracy effectively. For example, they use their speaking and listening abilities very well. They answer questions clearly and confidently and conduct discussions in a most mature fashion. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to write for a variety of purposes and audiences. The latter part of lessons is used well to gain a clear impression of the progress that pupils make. Teachers are also very skilled at enabling pupils to comment about what they do well and about aspects of their learning in which they feel less confident. The marking of pupils' work is good and provides them with helpful advice about how to improve. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and give good support for those who have learning difficulties and disabilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and there is a good range of additional activities that promote further learning. All the required subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good and provides well for the full range of children's learning needs. In some year groups, the curriculum links pupils' learning in different subjects well, but this is not consistent across the school. One example of its working well is the way that pupils' work in history is used very effectively to provide a stimulus for their writing. The provision for ICT has improved significantly since the time of the last inspection. It is used well to enhance pupils' learning in many subjects. Links with other schools make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers from the main partner high school visit to teach French. An effective partnership with the district council and a nearby high school is enabling pupils to experience an increasingly wide range of sports activities. These include badminton, football and a sports skills club. The school also provides a good range of educational visits that enhance pupils' learning well. Members of the community visit the school and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. The 'Friends of St Benet's School' are very supportive and raise significant additional funds each year, providing resources that benefit learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good, ensuring that pupils become increasingly confident learners. Child protection procedures are clearly understood and meet requirements. Pupils say they feel happy and secure. They express confidence in the support they receive for their academic work and for their personal, social and emotional development. Support for pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities is good. The progress of these pupils is monitored closely and shared with parents and carers. Parents and carers comment that arrangements to help new pupils to settle in are good. Teachers and support staff know the children well and arrangements to monitor their academic and social development are good. They also ensure that pupils are kept well-informed about the progress they are making and about what they need to do to improve. Pupils' opinions are clearly valued and the school council works effectively to ensure that pupils' views are heard.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The school's last inspection in June 2004 judged it to have serious weaknesses. This is no longer the case. Since that time the school has improved significantly. Teaching and learning have improved and standards are higher. The good leadership of the headteacher, who has recently moved to another headship, is the key reason for these improvements. Other teachers who have leadership responsibilities, such as subject leaders, fulfil their duties well and provide good support

for their colleagues. Procedures to check on and evaluate the quality of provision have developed well. However, the school's current self-evaluation tends to underrate the quality of some aspects of provision, especially in view of the improvement in standards in recent years. The school improvement plan is good. It sets out carefully identified priorities for improvement and shows how these will be achieved and evaluated. Parents' and carers' views of the school are generally positive. However, the inspection agrees with their view that they should be consulted more as part of the school's self-evaluation arrangements. Governance is satisfactory and governors are very supportive of the school. Some of the measures recently introduced to provide governors with an accurate view of the school's work and to help them to evaluate its quality are not yet fully embedded in their practice. For example, the linking of governors to particular subjects of the curriculum is at a very early stage of its development. The school uses the available resources to support pupils' learning well, providing good value for money.

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Inspection judgements

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|--|-----------------------|--------------|
| <i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i> | School Overall | 16-19 |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|

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 | NA | 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? | 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 | 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? | 2 | 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? | 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 | 3 | NA |
| The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected | No | 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

Thank you for talking with me during the inspection and making me feel so welcome. I think that your school is good and I know that you and many of your parents and carers think so too. You can be very proud of the standards you achieve and the progress you make. I was very pleased to see how you behave well, work hard and try your best. You are also very good at caring for and helping each other. The way in which you join in discussions and answer questions clearly and thoughtfully is very good. Your teachers and teaching assistants are good at helping you to do well. They are also very good at taking care of you and making sure you are safe. Your headteacher and staff have worked successfully to make your school much better than it was at the time of its last inspection. There are some things that your headteacher and the governors will be doing to make things even better. They will be making sure that they work even more closely with your parents and listen to their ideas. I would also like your governors to know more about your school so that they can work with the staff to make sure it continues getting better.