

St Boniface RC Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101042
Local Authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	285952
Inspection date	13 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Lynn Bappa

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	334
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr J Williams
Headteacher	Mrs S Kerins
Date of previous school inspection	24 June 2002
School address	Undine Street Tooting London SW17 8PP
Telephone number	020 8672 5874
Fax number	020 8767 4780

Age group	3-11
Inspection date	13 July 2007
Inspection number	285952

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

St Boniface is a larger than average, one-and-a-half form entry Catholic school serving a diverse London community. All the pupils are baptised Catholics. The percentage of children entitled to free school meals is below average, although many pupils come from families whose incomes are only just above the threshold for claiming this benefit. Over two-thirds of the pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds - this figure is well above the national average. The biggest ethnic groups, apart from White British, are those of other White backgrounds, White Irish, Asian and Black African. About half the pupils speak English as an additional language. This figure is well above the national average. The main languages spoken, other than English, are Tamil, Tagalog and Polish.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

St Boniface is an outstanding school. There are many reasons for the school's success. The school's strong Catholic ethos and its high expectations, together with an atmosphere that is friendly and caring, provide a safe environment in which pupils are able to blossom. Pupils respond positively to these features and take advantage of all the opportunities that the school provides. Their behaviour is exemplary. They play very well together and say that they go to a friendly school where everybody cares for each other. A comment from one pupil summed up the views of many: 'There are loads of people who smile here.' As a result, most pupils attend school regularly, thoroughly enjoy lessons and other activities and make excellent progress in their personal development and well-being.

Children start school with levels of knowledge and skills that are below those expected of three year-olds. They get off to a very good start in the Foundation Stage and are well prepared for more formal learning when they enter Year 1. As a result of the exceptionally high quality of the school's provision and their own extremely positive attitudes, pupils make outstanding progress during their time in the school. Standards by Year 2 are just above average. By Year 6, standards are significantly above average in English, mathematics and science. Teaching and learning are outstanding and this has a significant impact on pupils' progress. Pupils experience a very good range of interesting activities to help them to learn, including the creative use of resources such as interactive white boards. The good curriculum is well-planned to ensure that pupils make the best possible progress in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. There is some variability, however, in the planning and delivery of other subjects. The school is aware that in order to improve the curriculum still further, it needs to iron out these inconsistencies.

Outstanding leadership and management ensure that the school constantly reviews its progress and takes swift action where improvements or changes are considered necessary. The headteacher, with the support of her senior leadership team, plays a key role in this, as do the governors, who undertake their responsibilities extremely well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Iron out the inconsistencies in the planning and delivery of subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Standards are well above average and achievement is outstanding overall. Children join the Nursery with very modest skills, with particular weaknesses in gross and fine motor skills and in speaking and listening. Many of them speak little English when they arrive. Despite these disadvantages, the children grow quickly in confidence. They make good progress towards the expected learning goals and are very well prepared for more formal learning when they enter Year 1.

Secure foundations for learning are laid in Years 1 and 2, when pupils' basic skills are still being consolidated. This stands pupils in good stead, resulting in excellent progress being made throughout the junior classes by all groups of pupils, irrespective of their ethnicity, ability or gender. Standards are just above average by the end of Year 2. By Year 6, standards are significantly above average. Almost all pupils gain at least the expected levels in English,

mathematics and science, with high proportions producing work at the higher levels. Pupils do particularly well in mathematics. Their progress in this subject is exceptional and is in the top 2% of schools nationally. Performance in science, however, lagged behind that of other subjects in the 2006 national test results, with too few pupils achieving the higher levels. The school took quick action and there is evidence to show that standards have already begun to rise. The school is well on its way to meeting its challenging targets for next year and prepares its pupils very well for the next stage of their education.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils are proud of their school and respond positively to the many exciting opportunities available to them. Excellent relationships and exemplary attitudes are evident throughout the school. Pupils say that rare instances of bullying are dealt with well by adults. From an early age, pupils take on a wide range of responsibilities that develop their self-esteem and confidence very well. They are keen fund-raisers for charity and enjoy acting as classroom 'helping hands' or buddy readers. They are proud to represent their class on the school council and are enthusiastic about plans they are considering for a 'friendship bench' in the playground. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils learn to distinguish right from wrong, consider how their attitudes affect others and show a very good understanding of multi-faith Britain. This understanding is celebrated through the colourful displays of work in classrooms and corridors, for example the Hindu puppets made by pupils in Year 2. They recognise assemblies as important community as well as religious occasions, in which they can celebrate the success of others. Pupils take part enthusiastically in sporting activities and show a good understanding of why it is important to participate in them. They can explain which foods are good for you and enjoy sitting and chatting over their tasty and nutritious meals at lunchtime.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Pupils learn exceptionally well because the quality of teaching is consistently high. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is lively and interesting and provides children with very good opportunities to acquire essential skills. Teachers' expectations of work and behaviour are high and pupils try to live up to these. Teachers make tasks interesting and use resources imaginatively. In one lesson, for example, pupils threw imaginary darts at the interactive white board and a mathematical problem 'magically' appeared. Pupils make very good use of 'talk partners' to help them sort out their ideas before committing anything to paper. As a result, pupils are highly motivated, have very good speaking and listening skills and want to do their best. As one pupil commented, 'Teachers make our learning fun!' Marking is of a high quality and gives very good guidance to pupils on how to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is planned well to meet the needs of the mixed-age classes and offers a wide range of experiences to make learning interesting and relevant. Music provision has been improved, for example, and specialist teaching in physical education supports the delivery of

that subject. A recent focus on improving investigative skills in science is leading to rising standards. The good provision for personal, social and health development equips pupils to deal with sensitive and personal issues. The imaginative Foundation Stage curriculum covers all areas of learning and successfully targets those areas where children need most help. The provision for outdoor learning has improved. There are good links with local secondary schools. Planning for the development of pupils' basic skills is very good and links between subjects are improving. The school is keen to take this work forward by planning a richer curriculum with an increased focus on subjects other than English, mathematics and science. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the good range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities, such as residential trips and many clubs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides outstanding care, guidance and support, enabling pupils to develop into confident and independent learners. The school's ethos is warm and encouraging and relationships are excellent. Vulnerable pupils and those who are in danger of under-achieving are very well supported. The induction of children into the Foundation Stage is thoughtfully planned. As a result, children settle quickly into school. Pupils know who to approach if they have a problem and procedures for ensuring their safety are robust.

Academic guidance is very good. Teachers make very good use of assessment to identify learners who need extra help or who are at risk of underachieving. Pupils know how well they are doing and have clear targets to aim for.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding because there is a genuine concern for all pupils and a desire to help them succeed. The headteacher provides calm and determined leadership which unites the staff, leading to a climate of continuous improvement. She is well supported by a dedicated senior leadership team. As one teacher said, 'Everyone has a stake in this school.' The school knows itself very well and this is evident in the high quality of its self-evaluation. Excellent systems are in place to monitor the work that goes on. Governors actively support the school and undertake their responsibilities extremely well. Relationships with parents are very good and the vast majority express confidence in the work of the school. There are many signs of real improvement and the school is in an excellent position to build on these. Issues from the last inspection have been tackled well.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

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	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
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	1
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

3 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Boniface RC Primary School, London, SW17 8PP

I was delighted to visit your school recently. What a warm welcome I received! Thank you to all of you for that. Special thanks to the pupils who talked to me about their work and took me to lunch.

You all told me how special your school is and I agree. It is outstanding. You make excellent progress in your work because you want to do your best and because the teaching in your school is excellent. You told me that lessons are fun and I agree.

All the staff look after you really well and make sure you are happy and safe. You have an excellent headteacher who is helped by the rest of the staff and the governors to make sure that your school always wants to improve. I was very impressed by your excellent behaviour and by how sensible and friendly you are.

There is very little that needs to change in your school, but I have agreed with the headteacher that they should carry on with the work they have started in making sure that their planning in all subjects is as good as it is in English, maths and science.

I hope you all keep on enjoying school and wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Lynn Bappa
Additional Inspector