



# St Chad's Catholic Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 103435  
**Local Authority** Birmingham  
**Inspection number** 286659  
**Inspection dates** 23–24 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Christine Field

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Hospital Street
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Newtown
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		Birmingham B19 3XD
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 4646554
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	174	<b>Fax number</b>	0121 4646803
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Malcolm Spencer-Williams
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Bonita Ewins
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 February 2002		

<b>Age group</b> 4–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 23–24 January 2007	<b>Inspection number</b> 286659
--------------------------	---	------------------------------------

---

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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 two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is situated in an area of high deprivation close to the city centre of Birmingham. Most pupils are of White British heritage with a rising number from other ethnic backgrounds. Eight per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion that has learning difficulties or disabilities is average. A recent change is the increase in the number of pupils from refugee or asylum-seeking families who join the school part-way through their education, typically in Key Stage 2.

Pupils' attainment on entry to Reception is below average, particularly in terms of their language and literacy skills.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

St Chad's is a good school that is very highly regarded by staff, pupils and parents. Its ethos is warm, welcoming and inclusive. Excellent induction procedures help pupils new to the school settle well and make a purposeful start to their education. Pupils' attendance is very good and this is a positive feature in supporting both their academic and social achievements. Care and welfare systems are highly effective and are reflected in the outstanding relationships. Pupils say they love coming to school because everyone is kind, friendly and keen to do well.

From a below average start, good provision in Reception helps pupils to make good progress. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and good progress in Years 3 to 6 and reach above average standards by the time they leave. Lessons are enjoyable experiences in which typically good teaching enables most pupils to build key skills with confidence. Teachers plan their lessons effectively to meet the diverse needs of all pupils. However, they do not always ensure that pupils, especially the more able, learn at a good enough pace so that they make even faster progress. In some otherwise satisfactory lessons observed, predominantly in Key Stage 1, not enough challenge was injected into the activities set for more able pupils and this prevented them from reaching higher standards. In contrast, pupils with learning difficulties make good progress in all years because they work from tailor-made programmes that meet their needs and they are very well supported by the learning mentor and skilled teaching assistants.

There are satisfactory assessment systems in place and teachers have a clear picture of each pupil's day-to-day progress. Writing targets are set to help pupils understand their next steps in learning, but these are not checked regularly enough to see if pupils have achieved them and whether new targets need to be set. The school is aware of the benefits of involving pupils in reviewing how well they are doing but this is not yet common practice in all years. Although the overall provision for pupils' care, support and guidance is good, the school has rightly identified that these features of pupils' academic guidance are a key school improvement priority.

Pupils' personal development is good. They are very alert about keeping themselves safe and free from harm and have a good level of awareness about diet and nutrition. Pupils show very sensible choices at lunchtime and relish the chance to eat fresh salads and vegetables. Opportunities, such as being members of the school committee or house captains, successfully encourage pupils to voice their views and take decisions. Pupils' charitable efforts and their help for others in the local and wider community are outstanding.

The good curriculum, with a wide variety of additional activities, fosters in pupils a thirst for learning. The introduction of ballet for all infant pupils and instrumental tuition for all junior pupils is supporting positively their cultural appreciation and creativity and helping them to develop life skills such as determination, perseverance and patience. The headteacher provides very clear direction to the school's work. The staff work as a team, and show 100% commitment to helping pupils do the best they

can. School leaders have an accurate picture of strengths and weaknesses from good data analysis but they do not have a sharp enough focus when undertaking lesson monitoring. So for example, although well conceived strategies for improving writing are making a positive difference to pupils' achievements, the school has not yet pinpointed that this is having better impact on some groups than others. Although this is not a major shortcoming it is an area that the school recognises it needs to improve. The impact of good leadership and management, together with a stable staff team and effective governance, mean that the school has demonstrable capacity to build for even greater success.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve the quality of teaching by increasing the pace of learning and level of challenge in activities for the more able pupils, particularly in Key Stage 1.
- Ensure that stretching targets are set for all pupils in writing and that they have regular opportunities to check up on how well they are meeting them.
- Make sure that monitoring focuses on how well different groups of pupils are making progress and use this to better support teaching and learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils start in Reception with skills and knowledge that are below the level expected for their age. They make good progress and most reach personal goals by the time they start Year 1. However, a significant minority continue to require additional help to improve their language and literacy skills.

Pupils achieve well by the end of Year 6 with particularly effective teaching quickening the pace of progress in Years 3 and 6. In all years, pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make good progress because their specific needs are well met. More able pupils progress satisfactorily, but have the potential to be stretched further so that they reach higher standards. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, including those who speak English as an additional language, are represented in all ability groups and make the same progress as their classmates.

In the 2006 National tests, standards were not significantly different to the national average in Year 2 but were above average in Year 6. Data suggest that some more able pupils in particular, did not do as well as they could have done. The school's own analysis accurately pinpoints weaknesses in writing and in enquiry skills in science. The work in pupils' books shows positive impact from the strategies to improve these subjects but with better outcomes in Key Stage 2 than Key Stage 1, particularly for the more able pupils. Current Year 6 pupils are on track to reach challenging targets. The targets set in other years are realistic, but could be more demanding.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. The youngest pupils show a good level of independence by the time they transfer to Year 1. Because of the school's strong emphasis on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development pupils leave the school as confident young people who are very well prepared for future citizenship.

Pupils like school enormously and enjoy excellent relationships with each other and the staff. They have very positive attitudes in lessons and their behaviour is good. Pupils from different cultural backgrounds get along successfully with each other and show high levels of mutual respect. Pupils think carefully about the impact of their actions on others and raise funds to help those less fortunate than themselves. There are many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and look after each other. For example, all pupils in Years 5 and 6 take turns in being on the school committee. In this forum, they discuss how aspects of school life can be improved. As a result of their suggestions, an outdoor adventure area has been created with old tyres and a world map has been placed on the playground wall showing where pupils have family roots. Pupils are rightly proud of their school and told inspectors, 'There is nothing we want to change!'

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good as reflected in pupils' good achievements. The very youngest pupils in Reception enjoy a good range of learning experiences that enable them to build key skills with confidence. Teaching in Key Stage 1 helps pupils learn successfully but there is a tendency to underestimate the rate of progress some pupils are capable of making. In consequence standards reached by more able pupils are not as high as they should be by the end of Year 2. Good teaching in Key Stage 2 is reflected in the good achievement made by the end of Year 6. All pupils made good progress in Years 3 and 6 because lessons were highly motivating, challenging, identified clearly how much work should be completed, and moved pupils' learning forward at a brisk pace. Teachers use marking to praise and point out improvement. Ongoing assessment understandably focuses on making sure that those who have experienced difficulties in a lesson receive the extra help they need. There is scope for sharper assessment of the progress made by the more able learners so that more demanding work can be set for them in the next lesson.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The good curriculum is well reflected in the good progress that pupils make in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). This ensures they

have the skills needed to prepare them well for the next stage of education and future world of work. The very positive collaboration between the school and other providers, for example, Behaviour Support, Brasshouse Translation Centre and Psychology Service, assists the school in meeting the diverse needs of learners. Well forged links with the cathedral and parish both enrich the curriculum and assist pupils in building a very strong sense of community spirit. Music is a significant strength. The choir's performance during inspection was joyous and spiritually uplifting. The high profile given to personal, social, health and drugs education successfully harnesses pupils' good awareness of keeping safe and healthy. Those with special gifts and talents enjoy an enrichment project led by the learning mentor. However, work planned in lessons does not always fully meet the aspirations of the more able learners.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The care and support offered to pupils are outstanding. Very good attention is paid to promoting race equality. This is well reflected in the very positive way that pupils from refugee and asylum-seeking backgrounds are welcomed into the harmonious and family ethos of the school. The school knows its pupils as unique individuals and looks after them very well. Pupils know whom to turn to if they feel unwell or if they have a worry. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and vulnerable pupils, such as looked after children and those with learning difficulties, benefit from the additional support from a wide range of outside organisations. Teachers communicate very well with parents, especially when their children have specific needs. When asked what they liked best about the school, members of the school committee said with pride, `You always have friends at school` and, `People smile a lot in school`. Safeguarding measures, including child protection procedures, are rigorous and robust.

Pupils receive effective guidance in their work through informal discussion and marking. The recent introduction of pupil self-evaluation in some years is a positive feature. However, not enough use is made of assessment information to ensure that all pupils in all years make the best progress.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Strong and well focused leadership has maintained many of the strengths flagged by the last inspection and enabled significant improvement in ICT and the Foundation Stage outdoor provision. The changing intake has led to a strong emphasis being placed on meeting the needs of vulnerable learners. The school is very successful in nurturing these pupils' social and academic growth. Staff are confident and outward looking and they use partnerships with a range of organisations to very successfully enrich pupils' experiences.

Systematic school self-evaluation ensures that all areas of its performance are regularly checked and main weaknesses are diagnosed and tackled. However, the monitoring of lessons and sampling of pupils' work tends to focus on teaching qualities and is not

always rigorous enough in pinpointing learning spurts or delays at an early enough stage. Managers are alert to this and have already begun to explore how to use the range of data they have collected to better effect. Governors are supportive and visit regularly to see what is going on and ensure that all statutory requirements are fully met. They ensure that parents' and pupils' views are regularly sought and acted upon. Good attention is paid to making best use of all available resources in the interests of providing pupils with a good quality of education.



**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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Inspection judgements

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

### 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
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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
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	2

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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 making Mr Shepherd and I so very welcome when we came to visit your school. We enjoyed talking with you all about your work and have asked your headteacher to put your names in the Gold Book for being such good ambassadors. You told us your school is a good school and you are right - it is!

- These are some of the things we found out:
- Most of you achieve well from the time that you start school to when you leave at the end of Year 6.
- You are growing up to be confident and sensible young people who show very caring attitudes to one another. You enjoy attending school, and know how to behave well.
- You are taught successfully and teachers work hard to make learning good fun.
- The range of learning opportunities you experience is rich and exciting.
- Your school is an exceptionally caring place and you are confident that teachers will always help you to sort out any concerns. You look after each other well too and it was good to hear you say that 'everyone tries to be a good friend'.
- Leaders and managers do a good job and are working hard to help you. They are going to be checking up even more on how well you are learning and need to know if you find work too easy. To help your school even more, we have asked them to do these three things:
- Give you all high enough targets to aim for in writing and provide time for you to talk to teachers about how well you are reaching them.
- Help all of you, especially those of you in Key Stage 1 who find work quite easy, to be more speedy learners so that you reach even higher standards than you do now.
- Make sure that when senior leaders visit lessons to check up on how well you are doing they keep an accurate record of any differences between groups.

You can help your teachers by working as hard as you can. In Year 6, pupils use '1', '2' or '3' to show in their books how difficult or easy they have found the work. This helps their teachers know if there are any problems. We think this is a very good idea that all of you could use! Best wishes for a successful future.??