



# St Augustine's Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report - Amended

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education  
and care

**Unique Reference Number** 104100  
**Local Authority** Solihull  
**Inspection number** 286853  
**Inspection dates** 21–22 September 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Bogusia Matusiak-Varley

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Whitefields Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Solihull
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		B91 3NZ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 7054355
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	237	<b>Fax number</b>	0121 7059489
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Frank Miller
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Tina Willmott
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 January 2006		

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3–11	21–22 September 2006	286853

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## **Amended Report Addendum**

Report updated to resolve formatting inconsistency

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This is an average-sized primary school that serves an advantaged area of Solihull in the West Midlands. It has recently had its Investors in People status renewed and has gained the Healthy Schools Award.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school with several outstanding features. Pupils are well looked after in a caring environment where the school's mission statement of 'We love and learn together by growing in friendship with Jesus' underpins all aspects of school life.

Attainment on entry to the school is above average and throughout the school pupils make good progress and achieve well. Standards are exceptionally high in English, mathematics and science. Children in the Foundation Stage exceed the expected standards on entry to Year 1 because of the good provision. At times, the more capable children are not always given sufficient opportunities to form their letters and numbers correctly, resulting in staff having to revisit the teaching of these basic skills as children move up the school. Pupils' progress throughout the school, including those with learning difficulties, is good and standards are exceptionally high. In Years 1 to 6, pupils make excellent progress in speaking and listening. These high standards prepare them well for their next stage of education. Standards by Year 2, as shown by the 2005 national tests and teachers' assessments, are exceptionally high in reading, writing and mathematics. A similar picture is seen in Year 6. In spite of these very high standards, there is still room for improvement in developing pupils' skills of extended writing in English and problem solving in mathematics throughout the school. The school has identified these as areas for improvement in its very sharp evaluation of its strengths and areas for development.

Teaching is good throughout the school but it is better in Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and 2. Insufficient use is made of assessment in Years 1 and 2 to move different groups of pupils on in their learning. In addition, teachers' marking is far too generous and pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to correct and learn from their mistakes. In Years 3 to 6, there are elements of outstanding practice, especially in the way teachers challenge pupils' thinking.

Pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good, resulting in outstanding relationships and very good self-esteem. Attendance is first rate. Pupils love school and they are confident learners. They know how to eat healthily, stay safe and are enjoying school and achieving high standards, so they are well prepared for the world of work. Pupils behave well and have good attitudes to learning. Pupils receive good care, guidance and support, and their pastoral care is particularly effective. Pupils are very fond of their teachers, especially their headteacher, who they see as very caring and dedicated. The curriculum is outstanding as every opportunity is taken to bring learning alive. This school buzzes with excitement due to the high number of artists, musicians, theatre groups, visits and visitors

that support the curriculum. At the heart of this school is the very capable headteacher, who is ably supported by her senior leadership team. Leadership and management of the school, including governance, are good because there are very rigorous systems in place to support learning at all levels. Because of this, the school has good capacity to improve.

## What the school should do to improve further

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- Extend the very good practice that exists in Years 3 to 6 to raise standards further in writing and mathematics, especially in Key Stage 1.
- Ensure that higher attaining children in the Foundation Stage are taught correct letter and number formation.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Overall, standards are exceptionally high and pupils achieve well. The school successfully meets its challenging targets. The 2005 national test results show that by the time the pupils leave school standards are exceptionally high. Pupils' achievement was better in mathematics and science than in English, where it was satisfactory. The indications from the 2006 tests in Year 6 show that standards have improved. Pupils' progress has improved considerably in English because of all the strategies put in place by the headteacher.

Whilst there is still some work to be done in giving pupils more opportunities to write in other subjects, the school has worked very hard and successfully to improve boys' writing. A particularly strong feature of writing is the way in which pupils write up their scientific experiments clearly, planning their hypotheses and findings. In mathematics, there is still room for improvement throughout the school in developing pupils' skills of problem solving, which are not as strong as their skills in calculation. Pupils' rates of progress dip in Years 1 and 2 as not all pupils, in spite of exciting lessons, are working at full steam because some of the work is too easy for them.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being, as well as their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Pupils love coming to school. One parent said 'My child would like school to be open during the holidays.' Relationships are outstanding. The older pupils look after the younger ones and the use of prayer friends cements meaningful friendships among pupils. Pupils feel safe and know who they can turn to if they have a problem. Pupils are consulted on many aspects of school life and find Canon Kelly's 'prayer garden' a special place to spend quiet time.

Pupils have good knowledge of other cultures through the wide range of visits and visitors. Year 6 have visited 10 Downing Street and presented Ministers with their views of world poverty. Pupils contribute particularly well to the community through participating in parish events and supporting charities. Through the use of 'Building Learning Power' (a strategy used to develop good learning habits), pupils are able to identify and overcome any learning barriers that they might have. Their highly developed literacy and numeracy skills, together with their expertise in using computers, contribute well to their future economic well-being.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teachers have secure subject knowledge but sometimes in Years 1 and 2 they use too many strategies in too short a space of time to engage the pupils. This results in pupils not having sufficient time to really concentrate on their learning. The most successful lessons have a calm atmosphere where the use of assessment is apparent in the tasks that pupils undertake. In such instances, pupils know what is expected of them and they have time to finish what they started. An outstanding example of pupils having the opportunity to think about what they had learnt occurred in a Year 5 literacy lesson when pupils marvelled at the complexity of alliteration in Kit Wright's poems.

The quality of marking is inconsistent. Too often, in Years 1 and 2, teachers over-praise work which is clearly not the pupils' best. While some marking is excellent, some lacks advice and opportunity to learn from mistakes. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is generally good, especially in the way teachers interact with the children and help them develop good learning habits.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 1

There are very good opportunities for pupils to make progress and perform well. The outstanding links with the local secondary school have provided pupils with excellent opportunities to perform in musical events such as Benjamin Britten's *Noye's Fludde*. Numerous and varied extra-curricular activities provide for a wide range of interests, especially the large range of physical activities supporting the promotion of healthy lifestyles. Music is a strong area, with many pupils having instrumental lessons. The rich variety of activities, especially the visiting theatre groups, has a positive effect on pupils' enjoyment of learning.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Procedures for health and safety and child protection are robust and there is an extremely effective approach to help pupils new to the school settle in quickly. The Welcome Assembly for parents and pupils of the Reception class contributes greatly to the development of a very strong sense of community and belonging.

Pupils know their targets and procedures for checking that they are achieving their targets are thorough and consistently applied throughout the school. However, information from assessment is not used consistently well in some classes to move different groups of pupils on in their learning. There is a strong emphasis given to reducing any possible bullying and this works well as pupils are adamant about the high quality of care that they receive. Parents are kept regularly informed of their child's progress.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher knows her school inside out. She has put in place secure systems for checking the performance of pupils and staff. The professional development of staff is impressive. The school improvement plan is a very comprehensive document, providing staff and the governing body with all the information they need to focus on raising standards. The views of parents and pupils are regularly sought and their views inform changes in provision, for example, in providing French for Years 5 and 6 and creating a school website.

The school is successful because the headteacher has introduced a seamless approach to raising standards, such as the effective implementation of performance management. This has helped to bring a strong feeling of accountability, as demonstrated by the effective work of subject leaders. The governing body provides a good level of support and challenge for the headteacher, they fulfil their statutory duties and know the school well but are at the early stages of evaluating the cost-effectiveness of their spending decisions. The school is very effective in its use of resources and parents make outstanding financial contributions through very well attended fund-raising events.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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
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	1
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	1
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	1
How well learners enjoy their education	2
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	1

### 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>	1
<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	1
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**

22 September 2006

Dear Pupils

St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Whitefields Road Solihull, West Midlands B91 3NZ

Thank you for making us feel so welcome. You go to a good school, make good progress and attain very high standards. You have excellent speaking and listening skills and you all did very well in the Welcome Assembly, talking so fluently to so many parents and visitors. These are some of the other things that we found in your school.

You have excellent relationships with one another and you care for each other extremely well. We were particularly impressed by your use of prayer friends. You support charities very well and you think of other people less fortunate than yourselves. You attend school regularly, so well done. Large numbers of you join in the extra-curricular activities and teachers organise your learning opportunities well. You certainly enjoy all of your theatre visits and visitors to the school. Your headteacher and subject leaders have undertaken a fantastic review of your school's strengths and areas for development to ensure that you get a good quality of education.

You can improve your work even more by making sure that you take notice of what your teachers say when marking your work. Those of you who are in the Reception class and in Years 1 and 2 need to form your letters and numbers correctly. We know that this takes time but you will find this very useful as you will not have to spend so much time practising your handwriting.

We have asked your teachers to help you even more by using information from your test results to set challenging tasks for you when you are writing and solving problems.

With very best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

Ms B Matusiak-Varley Lead Inspector