



# St Bede CofE Primary School, Morris Green

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 105251  
**Local Authority** Bolton  
**Inspection number** 287173  
**Inspection dates** 17–18 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Gordon Alston

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>	Morris Green Lane
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Bolton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		Lancashire BL3 3LJ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01204 61899
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	440	<b>Fax number</b>	01204 61344
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr H Hirst
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr J. Hatch
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 January 2002		

<b>Age group</b> 3–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 17–18 January 2007	<b>Inspection number</b> 287173
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is larger than average and serves an area with below average economic circumstances. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals and the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are both below the national average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below average at 9%. Generally children enter school with standards that are at the level expected for their age but significant numbers have weaknesses in their language and social skills. The school provides funded nursery education, a breakfast club and out of school care. There have been five teachers new to the school in the last two years. The school has been awarded Investors in People status.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

St Bede's provides a good standard of education. It judges its overall effectiveness accurately and provides good value for money. Pupils achieve well in their academic and personal development. The school gives a high priority to pupils' personal development, which is good with strong features. Care and support are good, leading to good behaviour. Pupils approach their work with great enthusiasm. They take their responsibilities within school very seriously and have a good understanding of keeping safe. They cooperate well in teams and take the initiative, preparing them well for their future lives. They have an excellent understanding of how to keep healthy. Guidance systems for personal development are good, but although pupils have a general idea about their targets for improving their work, they are not always sure of the details.

Teaching and learning are good with excellent features. Throughout the school, teachers' high expectations of work and behaviour help establish a calm and purposeful atmosphere. They are successful in providing interesting tasks that engage pupils in their learning and use a range of teaching styles to match pupils' different needs. Assessment information is used well in planning lessons to meet pupils' needs but marking does not consistently tell them what is good or what they can do to improve it. Curriculum provision is good and provides exciting learning opportunities for pupils of all ages and abilities. These successfully help to motivate pupils, and support their learning and personal development.

Standards on entry to the school are broadly average. From the moment they enter the Foundation Stage, children make good progress because of the early identification of their needs and the very good management of their learning. As a result, most reach the expected levels in all areas of learning and are well prepared for their life in the school. Teachers build well on this flying start. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. In Years 3 to 6 pupils continue this good progress so that by the end of Year 6, test results are well above average in mathematics and in English. However, standards are not high enough in writing, particularly for more able pupils. Improvements in the teaching of writing are beginning to have a positive impact on standards. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also achieve well as they move up through the school.

Good leadership and management by the headteacher, senior staff and governors set a clear direction for the school and enable it to provide well for pupils' needs. Recent management reorganisation has added even more rigour to the systems for monitoring the school's performance. The result is a school with a strong sense of community and care in which pupils thrive. Parents are very appreciative of the school's efforts. Improvement since the last inspection has been good and the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing in Key Stage 2, particularly for the more able pupils, by further increasing opportunities to write across all subjects.
- Refine the procedures for marking pupils' work and setting their individual targets to ensure that pupils have a clearer idea of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

All pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups, achieve well. On entry to school, children's abilities are about at the levels expected except for weaknesses in their language and social skills. A great start during the Foundation Stage ensures that most reach the expected levels when they begin Year 1. Pupils build well on this good progress and by the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The good achievement continues and by the end of Year 6, pupils reach well above average standards in English and mathematics. In Key Stage 2 standards in writing are weaker than in reading, particularly for the more able pupils. The results in the 2005 national tests showed a fall from 2004 in English, linked to weaknesses in writing. These results alerted the school, which immediately took steps to remedy this. The 2006 data indicates that these actions were successful, but writing remains the weakest element of English. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also make good progress due to the very thorough systems set up to identify and support their individual needs.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school. They appreciate the rewards offered for their good manners and behaviour, especially the chance to eat on the headteacher's 'top table'. Attendance rates are average. Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good. They collaborate well together. Pupils are confident that there is little bullying and know that staff will deal promptly with any unacceptable behaviour. They have a good understanding of simple ways to stay safe. Pupils have an outstanding awareness of how to live healthily and they exercise regularly. More now choose to eat fruit and vegetables at lunchtime, an improvement triggered by discussions between the cook and Year 6 pupils. Together they devised the Hot and Healthy dinners initiative, which pupils enjoy. Pupils are involved in the school and wider community in an outstanding way. Important positions, for example as prefects, have to be applied for in writing. School councillors are elected and provide an effective voice for pupils' views. The eco-committee has been particularly influential in improving the school grounds and raising pupils' awareness of conservation matters. The pupils also willingly raise funds for charitable causes.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good with some excellent features. Typical strengths in lessons include teachers' ability to engage pupils' interests and make learning fun. They achieve this by effectively using a good range of practical activities, games and the interactive whiteboards. Lesson objectives are shared with pupils so that they know what they are going to learn, and good classroom management ensures that lessons run with little disruption. Teaching assistants are well briefed and provide good support for all pupils, especially those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Occasionally, at the start of lessons the pace is slow because teachers talk too much. This limits opportunities for pupils to take an active part in the discussion or to promote independent thinking skills. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked and assessment information is used well to plan work to meet their differing needs. Teachers' marking offers pupils encouragement but does not consistently tell them what is good about their work and what they can do to improve it next time. The teaching of writing has improved through a number of initiatives such as better assessment of pupils' work, more guided writing sessions and the use of drama. As a result, pupils' writing skills are improving.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The school provides a good range of learning experiences that meet the needs of all pupils. There is a growing emphasis on developing creativity, and subjects are linked together to make learning relevant and enjoyable. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to support learning in other subjects. The use of English, particularly writing, across subjects is being developed and is already showing signs of improving pupils' writing. Projects such as Eco School and Hot and Healthy successfully promote pupils' understanding of citizenship, staying safe and keeping healthy. Pupils benefit from a good range of well attended after-school clubs. Visits and visitors to the school effectively enrich the curriculum, enhancing pupils' experiences.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

The school judges this aspect as outstanding but in fact it is good, with strong features. Pupils say that they feel safe and know there is always an adult to turn to if they have any worries. This is because there is a very caring ethos, a safe environment and very good relationships between pupils and adults. Child protection, risk assessments and other arrangements to safeguard pupils are secure. Pupils' academic progress is regularly monitored enabling teachers to identify where extra support or challenge is needed. What is not so consistently well done is the setting and use of clear targets to help

pupils understand how they can improve. Pupils say they feel well supported in lessons. Staff reward successes and boost pupils' self-esteem. Those with specific extra needs are well supported by highly skilled staff and other professionals. This ensures that they achieve to the best of their capabilities. Pupils make a happy transition to and from school because of good liaison with outside agencies and parents. Attendance is well monitored, helping to ensure that absence rates are declining.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The school's self-evaluation is good; key areas for improvement are identified accurately. However, a couple of the school's judgements, including the effectiveness of its leadership and management, are too generous. Suitable measures are taken to tackle weaker areas, as shown by improved writing results in 2006. The school is rigorous in tracking academic and social achievements. Parents and pupils are properly involved in self-evaluation and their views are valued and acted upon. Staff make a strong contribution through their work as subject leaders, producing action plans which form part of the school improvement document. At the hub of this work are the experienced and strong headteacher and the enthusiastic senior managers. Their vision for the school is clear, reflecting well the range of local needs. A strong commitment exists to raise standards, improve provision and support the local community. As a result, there is a shared sense of purpose, and great rigour in the reorganised management structure. This contributes strongly to the school's good capacity to improve. The school gets good support from the governing body which holds it rigorously to account. Financial management is effective and prudent.

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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?	2
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	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
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	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	2
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**

I am writing this letter after spending two days in your school and want to thank you all very much for making the experience a very enjoyable one. We came to see how well your school is performing and you had a very important role in helping us to do this. Your good behaviour and warm relationships with one another are a credit to you all and helped us to judge just how well you and your school are doing.

Well, what did we think after these two days? I hope our report will help your teachers feel all the hard work they do is worthwhile. I always ask pupils their views of the school and one boy said 'Everyone has something to be proud of at St Bede's.' He was right; your school has lots of good things going for it. You have a caring headteacher and senior managers who lead your school and have your well-being at the centre of all they do. Along with all the staff they make learning interesting and encourage you to work hard. As a result, you are learning lots in lessons. They also arrange many visits for you and lots of visitors to school. We were pleased with how hard you work but equally important was how well everyone gets on together. Those of you with special responsibilities carry them out very well. We were also very pleased to see how many of you attend clubs and play sports.

I'm sure your teachers always say 'This is good but you could make it even better if you..' Well this is what we are telling your school - try to get the pupils, particularly the faster learners in junior classes, to write even better. We also want your teachers to make sure you understand what your targets are so that you know what you are trying to achieve and how you can improve. (I know you like the idea of having targets to work towards and achieve.) We want all your teachers to really push you and challenge you in all lessons. You can help by trying as hard as you can.