

Archbishop Runcie C of E First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108495
Local Authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	288118
Inspection dates	13–14 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Rosemary Rodger

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

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Philip Moorin
Headteacher	Mrs Julie Robson
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2002
School address	Christon Road Gosforth Newcastle upon Tyne Tyne and Wear NE3 1US
Telephone number	0191 2852663
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Age group	3–9
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average size school situated to the north of the city. It serves a largely advantaged residential area with small areas of social and economic disadvantage. The proportion of pupils having free school meals is low. Most of the pupils are of White British origin with a small percentage of pupils from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. A slightly below average proportion of pupils are in the early stages of learning English; mostly in the Nursery and Reception classes. A below average number of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. When they start in the Nursery, the children's attainment is typical for their age in all areas of learning. The school recently gained bronze and silver Eco marks, an ActiveMark and Investors in People.

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. There are some outstanding features. The school's strong Christian values are evident in all aspects of its work. It is very popular locally. Pupils' achievement is good. They make good progress and reach above average standards in all subjects by the time they leave in Year 4. The personal development and well-being of all pupils are outstanding. They are superbly well cared for in all respects and have excellent attitudes to learning. Pupils have a very good understanding of how to stay healthy and they feel safe and well cared for. Pupils make an excellent contribution to their own and the local community, particularly through their environmental work. Parents are fulsome in their praise of how well their children flourish. Typical of the many positive comments are, 'The school is very strong, focusing on each individual child both academically and morally and our child is thriving within it...', and the school provides '... a caring environment where individual talents are recognised and praised...' Pupils with a range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress and are included in all the schools activities because they are very well supported. More able pupils thrive and parents appreciate the 'wonderful nurturing environment' that supports them.

Leadership and management are good. Leadership of the headteacher is outstanding. The high priority given to raising standards and the efficiency with which management tasks are delegated have led to improvements. This too is welcomed by parents, 'The school is extremely well led and this filters through to all staff'. Governors are well informed and challenging. They manage the budget efficiently and value for money is good. The systems to check the quality of teaching and learning are very robust and have helped to bring about improvement. There is still, however, some way to go to improve the presentation of pupils' work and teachers' marking of work in Key Stage 2. Teaching and learning are good. Pupils' behaviour is good and they work hard in lessons. Children in the Foundation Stage have an excellent start to their education. They benefit from the high quality planning, assessment and teaching. The good curriculum is made more exciting by a large number of visits and visitors. Basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) are beginning to be practised and improved when pupils work in other subjects. Pupils sing beautifully and many demonstrate their musical talents well in daily acts of collective worship.

The school has a good capacity to improve and has made good improvements since the last inspection. The improvement to provision for pupils learning English as an additional language is particularly effective. This is evident in their good achievement in national assessments at the end of Key stage 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the presentation of pupils' writing in Key Stage 2.
- Improve the consistency in marking in Key Stage 2 so that pupils know what to do to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and by the time pupils leave school in Year 4 standards are above average. Achievement is consistently good in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. Standards in Years 3 and 4 have improved in the past year, especially in writing and mathematics, and are

now above average, and achievement in Key Stage 2 is good. The improvements have been brought about as a result of effective actions to improve teaching and learning.

When children start in the Nursery their standards are typical for their age in all areas of learning. By the time they leave the Reception class, standards are above average in all areas of learning and all children have made good progress. In the most recent national tests for Year 2 pupils, standards in reading, writing and mathematics were above average. An above average number of pupils reached higher levels. Standards have improved in the past two years, particularly in writing and mathematics because of the effective actions taken by subject leaders. Pupils of Asian British heritage achieved particularly well. The small numbers of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress and some pupils reach nationally expected levels.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Attendance is good and above the national average. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They said learning was fun and they learnt something new every day. Behaviour is good and pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and given a high priority in school. The school lives out its mission statement very well. Its excellent ethos is evident in the consideration pupils have for one another; for example, helping others who may feel lonely and use the friendship stop at play time. Opportunities for cultural development are exceptionally well provided for through music, links with Botswana, visits to places of worship and many visitors to school; for example, by African drummers. This, together with the good development of basic literacy, numeracy and ICT skills, means that pupils develop the skills and knowledge needed to make them responsible citizens. Pupils are aware that their achievements, in and out of school, are valued and these are celebrated through the weekly celebration assembly. Pupils are very knowledgeable about how to keep safe and healthy. They feel safe in school and know where to seek help if troubled. They understand the need for regular exercise and can talk at length about the impact of this and healthy eating. They readily take part in various physical activities; such as, in games of football and rounders. Pupils contribute to decisions about their school community through their involvement in the school council, for example, the purchase of playtime equipment. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the local community through their environmental work. They have close links with an allotment association and a range of local businesses. Their enterprise skills have enabled them to contribute to the wider community and support many charities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good, with some outstanding teaching. Precise learning intentions for lessons are shared with pupils and learning outcomes are reviewed. This means that pupils know what they have learned and how to improve their work. This is a recent introduction and is developing well. Relationships are always good and pupils' enjoyment of learning is palpable, particularly in the Foundation Stage. Good subject knowledge is effectively demonstrated through clear explanations to pupils. Expectations are high, leading to challenging activities for all pupils, but particularly the most able pupils. Planning is detailed and takes

account of the wide range of pupils' needs. Teaching assistants provide valuable and effective support to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils show good levels of independence and are effectively encouraged to talk about their learning in paired groups during lessons. Sometimes, introductory sessions are too long. Pupils are not always given sufficient guidance on the expectations regarding the presentation of their work. The marking of pupils' work is improving as a result of recent training though good practice is not yet consistent. Marking does not always help pupils know or understand what they have done well and what they need to do next.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum, which caters well for all pupils. Changes to curriculum planning, though in the early stages of development in Key Stage 2, are having a positive impact on achievement. More able children in English and mathematics are benefiting. There are more opportunities for enrichment through visits and visitors and basic skills are practiced more often in a wide range of subjects.

Teachers' planning is well adapted to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children in the Foundation Stage enjoy learning through play using an exciting range of resources, indoors and outdoors. Parents commented positively on the exciting work in the Foundation Stage, 'We are impressed with the project work on the rain forest and space, which have been exciting vehicles for learning'. Pupils have numerous worthwhile opportunities to develop safe and healthy lifestyles through activities such as cycling proficiency, working with the school nurse, paramedics and road safety officer. Their learning is enhanced through a variety of after school clubs, which are well supported; for example, sports and gardening clubs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support throughout the school are outstanding. This is because it is made clear to every pupil that they matter and they are well cared for. Arrangements for child protection, health and safety and risk assessment are thorough. Pupils' feel very safe at school. They trust staff and have confidence in them to deal with anything they are concerned about. The schools information about how well they are doing is used very effectively to help ensure that all pupils achieve well. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well supported by the teachers and teaching assistants who help them to learn as well as others in their class. There are good links with outside agencies in order to provide support for all pupils. Arrangements for starting school are very well developed. Arrangements for moving on to middle school are securely in place. Parents have very high levels of confidence in the school's care and support for their children.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The clear focus on raising standards and promoting the personal development and well-being of learners has led to improvements. The headteacher, ably supported by a recently appointed deputy, have developed a strong common sense of

purpose amongst the staff. Subject leaders have played an effective role in helping to bring about improvements. The school's self-evaluation provides an accurate diagnosis of the school's strengths and weaknesses and reflects the analytical and robust monitoring that has taken place. Actions taken by the school to raise standards in writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2 have had a beneficial impact. Arrangements to safeguard pupils meet requirements. Links with parents and outside agencies are good. The school has a good reputation in the local area, which is well deserved. The leadership and management provide the school with a good capacity to improve.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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

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	2
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
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?	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

15 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Archbishop Runcie CofE First School, Gosforth, NE3 1US

I am writing to thank you all for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our time at Archbishop Runcie and you helped by being so willing to talk to us. You go to a good school that is outstanding in the provision for the Nursery and Reception children, your personal development and well-being and how well you are cared for.

You reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the time you transfer to middle school and you are well prepared for this move. The teachers help you to do this, but we would like to see those of you in Years 3 and 4 making your work neater. Sometimes you do not know what to do to make your work better when your work is marked. Those of you who need extra support do well because you are so well supported by the teaching assistants.

We were very impressed with how well you are cared for and the way everyone looks out for everyone else. The friendship stop is a really good idea and makes sure you are never left without a friend. You are very lucky to have so many interesting clubs to attend after school. It was a delight to hear your beautiful singing.

Your headteacher and teachers work very hard to make your school as good as it is. We are sure it will go from strength to strength and become even better for you.

Good luck to you all.

Best wishes

Rosemary Rodger

Lead inspector