



# St Bridget's Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 112348  
**Local Authority** Cumbria  
**Inspection number** 289254  
**Inspection dates** 5–6 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Sheila Mawer

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>	St Bridget's Lane
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Egremont, Cumbria
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		CA22 2BD
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01946 820320
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	190	<b>Fax number</b>	01946 825090
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr William Moran
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Eileen O'Reilly
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 April 2001		

<b>Age group</b> 4–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 5–6 October 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 289254
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school serves an urban population with an above average degree of social deprivation. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is higher than average, as is the percentage who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Almost all the pupils are from White British backgrounds. The school does not have a nursery but works closely with a private nursery on an adjoining site. Playground space is small and barely adequate for the numbers on roll. The school has gained several awards, including the first Inclusion Chartermark in the county, the Healthy Schools Award and Activemark gold.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with good features. It gives satisfactory value for money. The school has successfully ensured that the gospel values of the Catholic Church are evident in the good quality care and support that pupils receive. Through its strong inclusion policy, it ensures that every child matters. As a result, pupils' personal development is good and behaviour is very good. The personal, social and health education programme is matched closely to the needs of the pupils. Consequently, they have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and healthy and how to form very good relationships. As one parent wrote, 'This is a wonderful caring school where staff want the best for every child.'

Pupils succeed in reaching average standards by the age of 11, apart from mathematics where standards are below average. Progress is satisfactory overall but too slow in mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of effective support and close partnership with outside agencies.

Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage and make good progress because provision is well matched to their needs and teaching is good. The children in the Reception class have access to a small outdoor area but there is limited equipment to challenge them sufficiently in their physical development. The school has good plans in place to put this right. Throughout the rest of the school teaching is satisfactory. Teaching is stronger in English and science than mathematics because of a weakness in the pace and challenge of learning in the latter subject. Teaching in Year 6 is particularly good because work is pitched at exactly the right level for all pupils to succeed. The good curriculum supports teaching well by providing enjoyable learning experiences, including the wide use of information and communication technology (ICT).

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has been successful in building a strong, stable team of staff who work well together as a team. Key staff and governors have a generally accurate view of the school and are addressing the weakness in standards in mathematics by monitoring and evaluating teaching and progress with more rigour than before. Improvements since the last inspection are satisfactory except in mathematics. The capacity to improve further is satisfactory.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the teaching of mathematics in order to increase the rate of pupils' progress and raise standards that they attain.
- Document reference number: HMI 2507 1 September 2006  
Inspection Report: St Bridget's Catholic Primary School, 5–6 October 2006  
Document reference number: HMI 2507 01 September 2006  
Provide an adequately resourced outdoor area for children in the Reception class.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Achievement is satisfactory overall. Children join the school in Reception with a wide range of abilities but their overall attainment is below that expected nationally for children this age. In the Reception class, they achieve well and make good progress except in their physical development, which is satisfactory. Most children reach the expected goals in all areas of learning.

In the infant classes, standards are average and progress is good in English and satisfactory in mathematics. Progress is slower in mathematics because too little time is allocated to the teaching of shape, space and measuring. In tests in 2005 the standards were average.

In the junior classes, standards are average apart from in mathematics where they are below average. Progress is satisfactory overall. Apart from 2004, there has been an upward trend in national test results. They were broadly average in 2005 and early indications from the 2006 results indicate a strong recovery so the school will meet its challenging targets. Progress in mathematics has been much slower and not all pupils achieve well enough. There is every indication from school data and good teaching that the pupils currently in Year 6 are making better progress in mathematics than has been the case among those in previous years.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress and achieve well through the school. This is because they receive high levels of support and challenge from teaching assistants and gain the confidence and skills to succeed.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils make good progress in developing the social skills that will help them grow into mature young people, learning to share and care for each other. Attendance is average and pupils enjoy coming to school and are most appreciative of the learning opportunities provided by their teachers. They have a very good knowledge of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and how to keep safe. Pupils take part enthusiastically in the many opportunities the school provides to enjoy sport and exercise. Behaviour is very good and pupils know that any bullying will be dealt with promptly. The school council gives pupils the chance to influence decisions on a range of matters, including improving the toilets and dealing with traffic problems outside the school. Pupils' spirituality is promoted successfully through the school's Catholic ethos and its celebration of different religious festivals. Fundraising for charities develops in the pupils the social skills they will need in the wider world.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Relationships are very good. This boosts the confidence of the pupils and helps them work harder and enjoy their learning. Computer technology is used imaginatively to explain new learning and bring subjects alive. Lessons are generally well planned, especially for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There is good teaching in English and science, which is leading to pupils making faster progress than previously.

There are areas for development in the teaching and learning of mathematics, especially in Years 3 to 5. Assessment information is not used enough to plan challenging work for all pupils and the slow pace of some lessons prevents them from producing the quality and quantity of work of which they are capable. There is an over dependence on everyone using the same text book, preventing the more able pupils from moving on to harder activities to help accelerate their learning. This weakness in the teaching contributes to pupils making slower progress in some junior classes.

There are many strengths in the good teaching in the Reception class and in Year 6. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are high and skilful questioning encourages them to think hard. A lesson on fractions in Year 6 inspired high levels of motivation in the pupils because it was taught with confidence, skill and imagination and the purposeful pace enabled a considerable amount of learning to take place.

Teachers make satisfactory use of assessment to check progress and set targets for improvement, although it is weaker in mathematics. Marking is generally good with suggestions as to how pupils can improve their work.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum for the pupils, which is underpinned by its Christian faith and values. An emphasis on developing creativity and linking subjects together is successful in making learning relevant and enjoyable. It contributes well to personal development but less so to academic progress in mathematics. The pupils enjoy a wide range of out-of-school activities, especially music and sporting clubs, and often join with other schools to extend their opportunities. The school works very hard to compensate for the limited space outdoors for sporting activities. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of visits and visitors as well as by a very good programme for personal, social and health education. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good except for outdoor play, which is restricted through a shortage of equipment. Pupils make good use of their literacy and information and communication technology skills to help their learning in other subjects, but this is not the case with mathematics.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 2

- The good quality of care, guidance and support provided by the school establishes an environment where children feel safe, secure and well supported. Child protection procedures and robust health and safety plans are in place and updated regularly. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully included in all that the school has to offer and achieve to the best of their capabilities. Vulnerable children and their families receive a particularly good level of care and support and this is recognised in the way parents speak highly of the school and the way their children become confident learners. The monitoring of the pupils' progress in acquiring basic skills is inconsistent. It is undertaken regularly in English but less so in mathematics. Although pupils are involved in setting and reviewing their own targets and are advised on how well they are doing, there is lack of consistency in mathematics and some pupils are not as well informed about how well they are doing.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory, although the school judges them as good. The headteacher and key staff have created a strong ethos for learning through good provision for personal development and care and support. They have not, however, tackled sufficiently the lower standards and slow progress in mathematics in the junior classes since the previous inspection. There has been a lack of rigour in identifying and implementing the improvements needed to raise standards more quickly in this subject. This is now being tackled in the school improvement plan. In the other areas identified as needing attention at the time of the last inspection improvements have been good. For example, the building is now more spacious and facilities for information and communication technology (ICT) have improved considerably. The dip in standards in English and science in 2004 has also been resolved through tackling underlying problems in the teaching and learning.

All school members work effectively as a team to overcome the barriers to learning that many pupils experience. They have been particularly successful in meeting the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and this is recognised in their Chartermark award and in the good progress these pupils are making. Procedures are also extremely robust in ensuring that pupils are safe at school.

Monitoring and evaluating procedures are satisfactory. The school development plan has improved since the previous inspection and there is a clearer focus on what impact it will have on pupils' learning. Although staff and governors contribute to the implementation and review of these plans, there is less involvement in seeking the views of parents and children. Governors are fully involved in all aspects of school life. They are generally well informed about school developments, but until recently they

have played a less active role in monitoring and evaluating the progress and standards in mathematics.



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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>	3
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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<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>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
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	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

The School Council

St Bridget's Catholic Primary School

St Bridget's Lane

Egremont

Cumbria

CA22 2BD

5 October 2006

Dear Children

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you all and appreciated the help you gave us with our work. We are pleased to tell you that your school is satisfactory and has many good features.

Here are the things we think are best about your school:

- the enjoyment you show in lessons and your willingness to work hard
- how well you behave and get on with everyone
- the way your teachers care and provide support for you in everything you do
- how brilliantly the school guides you in becoming healthy and safe
- how you benefit from a good variety of clubs, especially sporting and musical activities
- the way that the youngest and oldest of you in the school and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are taught particularly well and make good progress

Here are the things that we think could be better:

- The headteacher and all the staff and governors are going to help you do better in mathematics, especially in the junior classes, so that you can learn and achieve as well as you can.
- They are going to see if they can raise the funding to buy more equipment for the Reception children for the outdoor area, as there is very little for them to use at the moment.

You can also help to get better at mathematics by continuing to work hard at all times. Perhaps the school council might have some ideas for raising money for extra equipment for the Reception children.

Good luck in the future.

Yours sincerely

Sheila Mawer Gordon Alston

Lead Inspector Additional Inspector