



The Good Shepherd Catholic Primary, Arnold

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 122812
Local Authority NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Inspection number 292516
Inspection date 27 September 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs. Sue Hall

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Somersby Road Arnold, Arnold Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG5 4LT
School category	Voluntary aided	Telephone number	01159262983
Age range of pupils	4-11	Fax number	01159520217
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Chair	Father.F McLaughlin
Number on roll (school)	329	Headteacher	Mr. G F Whittle
Appropriate authority	The governing body		
Date of previous school inspection	10 March 2003		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average sized primary school serving an urban area on the edge of Nottingham. As a Catholic school it draws pupils from a wide area. Less than half the average number of pupils is entitled to free school meals and/or have learning difficulties or disabilities. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds with only a very small number whose mother tongue is other than English. In the past month the Foundation Stage pupils have moved into new premises and some other classes have relocated.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The Good Shepherd Catholic Primary provides a good quality of education. This judgement matches the school's recent self-evaluation, which shows it knows itself well. Parents are generally very supportive, one noting, '...that the school has a happy atmosphere and promotes a caring environment'. Pupils enter school with skills that are generally above average for their age. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage, where the quality of education has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils achieve and often exceed the targets expected of them by the time they enter Year 1 because the teaching is good. At the end of Year 2, standards are usually above average, and best in reading. By the end of Year 6, standards are also above average and a large proportion of pupils attained the higher than expected Level 5 in national tests in 2006. Pupils' excellent behaviour allows them to make the most of lessons. Standards in writing across the school are not as consistently high as in other subjects. Pupils of all abilities make good progress and achieve well. Last year in Year 6 pupils' attainment was particularly good. Pupils' personal development is good with some excellent features. Pupils behave extremely well, have positive attitudes to their work and really enjoy their time in school. They therefore make good progress. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and there is a strong faith base at the heart of the school. Staff encourage pupils to make healthy lifestyle choices and to keep safe, which is good preparation for their future lives. The quality of teaching and learning is good and as a result pupils make good progress with their work and learn to be responsible young people. Teachers clearly tell pupils what they have to do in lessons and activities are well matched to the different abilities. There is very good provision for after school activities. Care, guidance and support of pupils are good overall, hence pupils feel safe and able to settle to their work. The school has recently extended the ways in which it checks and tracks pupils' progress. However, more remains to be done to ensure the information gained is used to best effect and that consistently challenging activities are provided, especially in writing. Leadership and management are good. The school has developed an effective system of staff teams to plan and monitor the work of the school. This shared responsibility has the positive impact of involving staff in school improvement planning and improving the quality of teaching. Governance of the school is good. Governors keep a watch on how the school is getting on and help to plan for improvement. The school provides good value for money and has a good capacity to continue to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the way in which staff check and track the progress pupils make and make full use of the information gained to ensure pupils achieve the best they can, particularly in writing.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well. Children enter the school with a wide range of early experiences and most are enthusiastic learners who want to succeed. They make good early progress, achieve well, and usually exceed the targets expected of them on entry to Year 1. At the end of Year 2, standards are typically above average. Assessments made at the age of seven indicate there are particular strengths in reading but that in some years not as many pupils achieved as well in writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average. In the 2006 national tests at age eleven pupils did very well, with all reaching at least the national standard (Level 4) and with a high proportion attaining the higher Level 5, especially in science. Standards across the school in writing remain slightly below those in other areas.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal development of pupils is good with some very strong features. The behaviour of pupils is excellent and they have very positive attitudes to work. Many are really proud of their school. There is an excellent approach to encouraging healthy lifestyles, particularly in the strong provision for sport. Attendance is good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall with a strong faith base. The school is working effectively to extend pupils multi cultural experiences. There are effective links with the local community, but while there are some opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities within the school, these are not extended further so that greater account is taken of pupils' views and more have specific roles across the school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching leads to pupils' good progress and positive attitudes to school. Teaching and learning are now good in the Foundation Stage and more effective than at the time of previous inspections. This is an exciting phase of development for the youngest pupils with brand new accommodation and resources coupled with carefully considered planning from the Foundation Stage team. Teaching in Years 1 to 6 is also good and particularly strong for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Whilst teaching and learning are not as consistent in other year groups they are, nevertheless, good overall. Staff plan lessons well and there are good arrangements to teach some years in smaller ability based groups. This ensures a good and appropriate level of challenge for all. Pupils learn well because they want to do well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

There is a strong focus on the teaching of literacy and numeracy which enables pupils to develop good basic skills that equip them well for their futures. Work pupils have completed recently indicates that despite a big focus on writing, pupils do not always complete many pieces of extended writing in the depth that they need to in order to reach higher standards. There is a strong focus on physical education. There is a very good extra-curricular programme with a wide range of lunchtime and after school activities including several sports, French and musical instrument tuition, all of which broaden pupils' horizons.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The pastoral care of pupils is good. As one parent notes, 'Staff are enthusiastic, dedicated and...giving many more hours than expected...ensuring that our children have positive learning experiences inside and outside of the classroom'. Staff know the pupils well, quickly recognise when they need support and make clear to them what they need to do to improve. This provision helps them make quicker progress. A positive feature of the many additional 'yard duties' that staff carry out is that they know younger and older pupils which enables them to build good personal relationships, recognised as important within a large school. A small number of parents are rightly concerned that the school employs too few mid day supervisors for the number of pupils in school. To meet this shortfall staff carry out extra duties so overall the safeguarding of pupils is satisfactory. The way in which staff check and track the progress pupils make is also satisfactory but the school is at an early stage in using the information available to best effect.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school has recently moved to a new management structure that enables staff to plan and work together in teams. The new senior management team now encompasses the role of the assessment co-ordinator. This is rightly starting to place a greater emphasis on gaining information about the progress pupils make and using this data to identify trends in attainment. Senior staff recognise the importance of monitoring the progress of groups of pupils, such as summer born boys or the small number from ethnic minority groups to ensure they make good progress. The organisation of a middle management team and other planning teams, whilst at an early stage, is a positive move to extend the existing monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school. Governance is good. There are governors with good professional skills and understanding of their roles which is advantageous when holding the school to account for what it provides.

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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	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

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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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	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	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?	2

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.

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	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

Dear Children The Good Shepherd Catholic Primary School, Somersby Road, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 4LT Thank you very much for looking after me when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed speaking to several of you in lessons, at lunchtime, in the playground and when I met the school council. I was very interested to hear that you enjoy nearly all the things you do and particularly the extra-curricular activities. These are the things that I found are best about your school - - You enjoy coming to school and behave really well. - You know how to be healthy and enjoy lots of sport. - When you are eleven lots of you do really well in national tests. These are the things that I think could be improved - - When teachers check your work they could use what they find out to help you do even better, especially in your writing. Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly when I came to see you. Remember that you can do a lot to help your school improve by trying really hard all the time. Yours sincerely Sue Hall (Lead inspector)