



St Edward's Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 125707
Local Authority Warwickshire
Inspection number 293338
Inspection dates 6–7 November 2006
Reporting inspector Doris Bell

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Packington Lane
School category	Voluntary aided		Coleshill
Age range of pupils	4–11		Birmingham B46 3JE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01675 463249
Number on roll (school)	209	Fax number	01675 463249
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	M Sherratt
		Headteacher	Gillian Owen
Date of previous school inspection	26 March 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4–11	6–7 November 2006	293338

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This slightly smaller than average primary school serves a wide geographical area where socio-economic indicators are broadly average. Attainment on entry to the school is as expected for the children's ages. A small proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds but none is at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This school provides its pupils with a satisfactory standard of education. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2, reaching standards that are above average. Standards are also above average by Year 6, but progress is patchy in Years 3 to 6 because teaching is more variable in these years. However, taken across the whole school, the quality of teaching is satisfactory.

The school knows what it does well and where it needs to improve. However, its own evaluation of its effectiveness was over-optimistic because it had not looked closely enough at the downward trend in pupils' progress in the last few years. Overall improvement in the issues identified at the last inspection is satisfactory, but teaching, standards and achievement declined. The school's success in getting these back on track in the past year demonstrates that the quality of leadership and management, and its capacity to improve, are satisfactory.

Children's progress and the quality of provision are satisfactory in Reception. Standards are as expected for this age group except in personal, social and emotional development, where they are above average. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good throughout the school, because of the good care, guidance and support provided for them. The very good relationships between pupils and teachers are a key strength of the school. Parents are very satisfied with the school, describing it as an 'extended family', offering 'exceptional care'. Pupils enjoy school and they are keen to learn, especially when their teachers make learning exciting for them.

The checks made by senior managers on the quality of teaching in the classroom are accurate. However, the checks made on teachers' planning, their setting of targets for individual pupils and their use of assessment information are not sharp enough. Pupils' targets are sometimes too complex for them to understand and teachers' marking rarely refers to them, even although subject action plans clearly urge them to do this. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to support learning. However, whilst the curriculum is satisfactory overall, opportunities are missed to promote the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make the quality of teaching more consistently good in Years 3 to 6 so that pupils can continue the good progress they make in Years 1 and 2.
- Extend the evaluation of teaching and learning to include rigorous checks on how well assessment information is used in planning and target setting.
- Simplify pupils' targets for them and improve teachers' marking so that it helps pupils to understand how to reach their targets.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards overall are as expected nationally at the end of Reception, reflecting the satisfactory progress children make in their first year in the school. Children reach good standards in personal, social and emotional development. In Year 2 in 2006, a greater proportion of pupils reached the higher levels in reading and writing than in previous years. Standards were above average and all groups of pupils made good progress. In Year 6, the national test results for English, mathematics and science were all above average, including at the higher level. However, for all groups of pupils, progress was only satisfactory when compared with the standards they reached when they were in Year 2. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall.

Test results for pupils in Year 6 declined over time and were below average in 2005. The school successfully improved pupils' achievement in 2006 by introducing specialist mathematics teaching and involving the headteacher in teaching Year 6. However, older pupils are still catching up on learning they missed earlier. Pupils do not readily apply their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects because they are not systematically expected to do so. This too limits their progress, especially in writing and the use of grammar and punctuation. However, the school met the targets it set for pupils in Year 6 in 2006. It has set even more challenging targets for 2007 and is working hard to reach them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Good relationships underpin the school's success in this aspect of its work. Pupils like and respect their teachers and their feelings are reciprocated. They feel safe and valued, secure in the knowledge that the staff have their best interests at heart. They behave well, enjoy school and are keen to learn. One parent commented, 'My daughter just can't wait to get back after the holidays'. Despite this, attendance is only satisfactory because some parents still take their children on holiday during term time.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is good. Pupils are strongly aware of their spiritual heritage, and prayer and reflection are common features of school life. Pupils respond positively when given responsibility, for example as buddies to younger pupils or as members of the school council. Pupils are safety conscious; they feel safe and show concern for the welfare of others. They understand the importance of healthy living and they contribute well to the community. With a strong social awareness, they raise funds for good causes. Their satisfactory progress in English and mathematics and their good progress in ICT help them to be soundly prepared for their future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Significant variations in teaching cause pupils' progress to be uneven, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The good teaching evident in some year groups is not shared extensively enough. However, lessons are orderly and classroom management is good. This contributes to the pupils' good behaviour and their willingness to learn.

Pupils do best when they understand how well they are progressing. For example, in a Year 6 numeracy lesson, a pupil proudly stated that she had 'got it now' because the teacher had explained equivalent fractions well. Similarly, the exciting way in which the Year 2 teacher helped pupils to record their findings helped them understand that they could reach different conclusions after a scientific investigation. In Reception, children are not always given enough adult help when they are working on different tasks. This limits their progress.

Teachers' planning, though satisfactory overall, is too variable. The best planning matches the needs of different groups of pupils well because it is annotated to remind teachers what pupils need to do next. Elsewhere, steps in learning are not identified clearly enough. This makes it unnecessarily difficult for teachers to set clear targets for pupils based on the accurate assessment of their learning, or to use assessment information in their planning. It also limits the usefulness of the target setting process in improving pupils' progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

In Reception, children benefit from a broad range of learning experiences and their personal, social and emotional development is fostered particularly well. In Years 1 to 6, satisfactory provision is made for the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. However, opportunities are missed to apply and extend these skills in other subjects. Effective use is made of ICT to support pupils' work across the curriculum. Good provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education and the curriculum is effectively enriched by a good range of educational visits, visitors and clubs. Special events such as the weeks devoted to multicultural awareness and mathematics capture pupils' interests and benefit their learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents are justifiably confident that their children are safe and well looked after. Effective arrangements ensure that children settle quickly in Reception and pupils transfer confidently to their high schools. Good links with other schools and outside agencies provide additional support for the least and most able pupils. Child protection procedures are robust and health and safety procedures are good. Teachers nurture

pupils' personal development effectively but the support for academic development is only satisfactory. Pupils have targets for English and mathematics but some are unclear about them. Teachers' marking rarely refers to pupils' targets and does not always give pupils enough guidance on how to improve. In one class, pupils' work had not been marked for some time. These factors restrict pupils' progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher and the majority of staff are working hard to drive up pupils' achievement. This contributed to the improvement evident in 2006. Governors and senior managers regularly review the school's performance but they do not all have a clear enough understanding of the central importance of pupils' progress in judging success. This led to the school's over-optimistic view of some aspects of its work.

Regular classroom observations have identified correctly the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning during lessons. These are properly followed up. The headteacher has an accurate view of teaching and has done her best to minimise the impact of less effective teaching. Nevertheless, checks on teachers' planning and pupils' work are not sharp enough. Subject leaders receive copies of teachers' planning but they do not evaluate it rigorously enough or give teachers clear enough guidance on how to improve it. Senior managers carry out checks on pupils' work but they do not do this frequently enough. They too readily assume that all teachers are doing what they have been asked to do in relation to marking and setting targets. However, these aspects of teaching are not consistent and the good practice seen in some year groups is not shared with others. This contributes to the pupils' uneven progress in Years 3 to 6.

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?	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	3
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

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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	3

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	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	2
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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
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?	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

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed talking to you, visiting your classrooms and finding out how eager you are to learn. We also read carefully what your parents had to say and this was very helpful to us. We are pleased to tell you that St Edward's provides you with a satisfactory standard of education and that some aspects of its work are good. This letter is a summary of what we found:

- overall, you make satisfactory progress and you reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the time you leave St Edward's
- the teaching is satisfactory and we saw some really good teaching in some classes
- we agree with you and your parents that you are well cared for and supported by your teachers. The school is safe and orderly, allowing you to enjoy learning and develop good personal skills
- your school is led and managed satisfactorily. You are given the right things to learn and a good range of clubs and activities is provided for you.

These are the things we have asked your school to do even better:

- make sure that teaching is equally good in all classes so that you can make equally good progress in all year groups
- check that teachers always use the information they have about your progress to plan work that gives you something new to learn in every lesson
- give you more guidance on how you can improve your work by making your targets easier for you to understand, and referring to them when teachers mark your work.

We hope you have found this summary interesting and that you continue to enjoy learning in the future. We wish you all well.