

St Augustine's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131071
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	293700
Inspection dates	23–24 April 2007
Reporting inspector	Christopher Parker

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	423
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Marie Withers
Headteacher	Mrs Carmel Smith
Date of previous school inspection	15 October 2001
School address	Tomlinscote Way Camberley GU16 8PY
Telephone number	01276 709099
Fax number	01276 709098

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	23–24 April 2007
Inspection number	293700

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school. The pupils are predominantly from White British backgrounds. There are very few pupils whose first language is not English. The proportion with learning difficulties and disabilities is broadly average. Three new teachers were appointed in September 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school provides a good education for the pupils. From relatively good starting points most make good progress and attain high standards. The pupils achieve well because the teaching is good. The headteacher has created an ethos in which the pupils make outstanding progress in their personal development to become tolerant young people who have mature attitudes to learning. Their behaviour is excellent.

The children make a bright and lively start to school life in the Foundation Stage. More children than usual reach the goals set for the end of the Reception Year because the teachers give them many interesting things to do. They also have good opportunities to develop their independence through purposeful play. The school has taken steps to help the children to move seamlessly from Reception to Year 1 to ensure they continue to make good progress. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are consistently very high by the end of Year 2. The school is looking to use the lessons it has learned about moving from one year to another, when pupils move from Year 2 to Year 3. At this point, test results show that progress made by some pupils appears to slow, although in lessons they are currently doing well. By the end of Year 6 most pupils have made good progress and standards are exceptionally high in English and mathematics. In science, standards have not been quite as high over the last two years but improvements to the curriculum have resulted in pupils now making good progress and the standard of their work is well above average.

The teaching is good. Lessons are purposeful, and the teachers set the pupils tasks which engage and interest them. They respond particularly well to the use of interactive whiteboards and rise to the challenges set by the teachers in most lessons. The pupils' work is conscientiously marked but there is considerable variation in how effective the teachers' comments are in helping the pupils to improve their next piece of work. Similarly, approaches to setting targets for the pupils are inconsistent. As a result, some are not clear what they need to do to make even better progress and reach higher standards.

Parents are very pleased with the school's performance and many commented how much their children enjoy school. The school has made good progress since the last inspection, not least in the role of the governing body. It is now extensively involved in school self evaluation and development planning. The leadership team has established a range of activities to check that the teaching is effective. However, some of the monitoring of the quality of teaching is not focused sharply enough on the impact on pupils' progress. Subject leaders are increasingly effective in developing the curriculum, supporting the teachers and analysing how well pupils are doing. The school is well placed to continue to improve and to ensure that standards remain high.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve marking and target setting so that all pupils know what they need to do make rapid progress and reach higher standards.
- Improve the transition from Year 2 to Year 3 so that all pupils continue to make good progress.
- Ensure the monitoring of the quality of teaching has a sharper focus on the impact on pupils' progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well and reach high standards. They are well prepared for the future. When they start school many have better developed skills than usual. They do well in the Reception Year. They continue to make good progress and reach high standards by the end of Year 2. In tests in all subjects results were significantly better than the national average every year from 2002 to 2006. Often standards reached exceptionally high levels. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher level in the 2006 tests was much higher than in most schools. The position is very similar at the end of Year 6 where standards are also very high, often exceptionally so. However, a few pupils, particularly those who reached the higher level at the end of Year 2 do not attain similarly high levels at the end of Year 6. Further analysis of the pupils' performance shows that a small group of average ability pupils also do not make quite as much progress as they should. The school is looking to improve the performance of these small groups of pupils by exploring ways of ensuring they make better progress when they move from Year 2 to Year 3. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The pupils' personal development is outstanding. Their mature attitudes and positive approaches to learning enable them to do well in lessons and reach high standards. Attendance is well above average.

The youngest children make particularly good progress in their personal and social development. This is built on very effectively throughout the school and pupils' make rapid progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Consequently, they are very considerate towards each other and work and play together with harmony and great enjoyment. The pupils willingly take responsibility. Older pupils are very caring and helpful towards the younger children. They say they feel very safe at school, incidents of bullying are extremely rare and dealt with very quickly. Pupils embrace healthy lifestyles with enthusiasm. They make very good use of the trim trail and know the importance of a balanced diet.

The pupils make a very strong contribution to the community. They raise money for a wide range of charities. The school council has made an excellent contribution to the development of the prayer garden.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The teaching is good. The teaching of the youngest children is effective because it is lively and encourages them to make choices and generates independence. Older pupils are encouraged to contribute fully to lessons and rise to the challenges set by the teachers. Teachers make it clear what they expect them to learn in lessons. Pupils enjoy lessons and respond very positively to thoughtful questioning and listen carefully to explanations. As a result, learning moves along at a good pace. Tasks are interesting and engage the pupils who display very mature attitudes to learning.

The pupils' work is carefully marked and their success evaluated. Pupils are encouraged to do their best and they enjoy the positive comments their teachers make on their work. However, they are not consistently given guidance on how they should improve their work. The teaching assistants work closely with the teachers to provide good support for small groups and individuals through carefully modified tasks.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is well matched to most pupils' needs. There is a good emphasis on developing the pupils' literacy, numeracy and information technology skills. The pupils' literacy skills are particularly well developed through good opportunities to write at length and for different purposes in, for example, science and history. Pupils from Year 3 have excellent opportunities to begin to learn a modern foreign language because the school has very good links with the neighbouring specialist language college.

The curriculum is enriched by creativity weeks, visits and visitors that provide an extra dimension to what the pupils are learning in lessons. The Foundation Stage curriculum provides many opportunities for children to work with adults as well as to develop independence and make choices, both in the classroom and outdoors. A few parents would like to see more opportunities for competitive sport but currently the school provides a reasonable range of coaching and competition for pupils both during and after school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support for pupils are good. The school takes appropriate steps to make sure that pupils feel safe and well cared for. The required checks are carried out on all adults who work in the school. Teaching assistants provide highly effective support for individuals and small groups. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are supported thoughtfully and challenged to make sure they make good progress.

Academic guidance and target setting varies considerably from class to class. Many pupils have targets to 'make my work neater' or to, 'improve my spelling' but few receive precise guidance on what they need to master in order to move rapidly to the next level.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has created an ethos and atmosphere in which the pupils thrive. As a result they achieve well and reach high standards. The leadership team has a clear and accurate view of the school's performance and a very thorough development plan to bring further improvement. Whilst it analyses and monitors the performance data with an increasingly sharp focus, the monitoring of the quality of teaching is less incisive. Lesson observations focus too heavily on the teaching and too little on its impact on the pupils' progress.

Subject leadership is having an increasing influence on the leadership of the school, particularly in the implementation and evaluation of the school development plan. Leaders are now taking full responsibility for bringing about improvements in their subjects. Governors are also heavily involved in monitoring the impact of the school development plan. They also hold the school

to account for its performance seeking explanations for any fluctuations in the pupils' progress or the standards they achieve.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	-----------------------

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?	1
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	1
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	1
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	1

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.

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	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

4 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Tomlinscote Way, Camberley, GU16 8PY

This letter is to tell you about the findings of the recent inspection and to thank you for taking the time to talk to the inspectors. You go to a good school that has a good plan to make it even better. Your personal development is outstanding. You feel safe, behave extremely well and show great care and concern for each other. The children we spoke to really enjoy school and relish the opportunities it provides.

You benefit from a good curriculum that allows you to develop your literacy and numeracy skills to a high standard. You are doing well in lessons because the teachers make them interesting. You concentrate on your work and make good progress. The teachers keep a close eye on how well you are doing. Some test results, from previous years, show that some of you did not make as much progress as might be expected when you moved from Year 2 to Year 3 so we have asked the headteacher to take steps to make sure there is a smooth transition for all of you. Some, but not all, of your work is marked with detailed comments to help you to improve. We would like the teachers to mark all of your work in this way so that you all know what to do to improve it and reach very high standards. Some of you have targets but most are very broad. We have asked the teachers to give you much clearer targets so that you know exactly what you need to do to reach the highest standards.

The headteacher and the leadership team want all of you to do really well. They do a lot of checking to see that you are being well taught. We have asked them to be a more sharply focussed on the effect the teaching has on your progress so that they can help the teachers to help you to make even better progress.

We all enjoyed being in your school. We hope that in the future it is even more successful in helping you to do as well as you possibly can.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Parker

Lead Inspector