

St Osburg's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103711
Local Authority	Coventry
Inspection number	308397
Inspection dates	14–15 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Susan E Lowry

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	219
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gary Byrne
Headteacher	Tracey McGeever
Date of previous school inspection	5 July 2004
School address	Upper Hill Street Coventry CV1 4AP
Telephone number	024 76227165
Fax number	024 76230653

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is of average size and is very near the city centre of Coventry. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above that seen nationally. Approximately a quarter of the pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds, although there are relatively few pupils who speak English as an additional language. However, this picture is changing with an increasing number of pupils from Eastern European countries joining the school. The headteacher was appointed in January 2008.

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. It has some good features, including the provision made for children in the Foundation Stage. Parents' views of the school are overwhelmingly positive and parents are appreciative of the increasing number of clubs available for their children.

Achievement overall is satisfactory and pupils attain standards that are broadly average by the end of Year 6. Pupils do better in English than they do in mathematics and science. Whilst progress in all subjects is satisfactory overall, it is inconsistent with some pupils, particularly the more able, not achieving the standards of which they are capable in these three subjects. The specialist teacher provides good support for pupils learning English as an additional language and this enables them to take a full part in all aspects of the curriculum.

The overall picture is of satisfactory teaching, with evidence of good practice. Nursery and Reception classes provide children with a good start so that on entry to Year 1 most have attained standards that are broadly average for their age. Teachers have very good relationships with the pupils and have high expectations of behaviour and presentation. However, throughout the school, and particularly where progress is not as good, the use of day to day assessment to plan sufficiently challenging work for the more able pupils is not always effective. Although there is evidence of good practice, marking often fails to identify what the pupils should do next to improve their work. Staff look after the pupils well and, consequently, they feel safe. Pupils believe that when bullying takes place adults deal with this well.

The curriculum is successful in stimulating the pupils' enthusiasm for learning and, as a result, pupils behave well. The introduction of a more creative curriculum in Years 5 and 6 is beginning to stimulate pupils' enthusiasm further. The school rightly recognises the need to develop further this aspect of its provision. The otherwise satisfactory personal development and well-being of the pupils are enhanced through its good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and good contribution to the community. Attendance is satisfactory and the school is doing all it can to improve this. Pupils are well cared for and there is good pastoral support. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Pupils have a good awareness of their targets but they are not amended sufficiently frequently to ensure they lead to improvement in pupils' progress.

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is working to develop the already established strong senior management team. This team, together with the governing body, has embarked on a number of programmes to bring about an improvement in standards. This work has resulted in a steady improvement in achievement and attainment, although the academic standards of the school's more able pupils are not yet at expected levels. There is substantial detailed summative assessment available to all managers, although there is not robust use of this data in order to bring about improvements in teaching and learning. The school shows satisfactory capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the Nursery with skills that are below that expected and make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage so that by the time children enter Year 1, they have attained broadly average standards. The Foundation Stage is a very positive learning environment. There

is a sense of celebration of achievement; every one involved in the child's education celebrates every small step made by children and the experienced teaching staff clearly nurture those in their care. The outside play area is a rich and stimulating environment and the staff make good use of these facilities to enhance the children's physical and social skills. Teaching is consistently good. There is a good balance of child chosen activities and those directed by the staff. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is good. Assessment procedures are good and used well to plan work for all children. Plans are well advanced to enable the Nursery and Reception classes to be located together, enabling them to make more effective use of staff and resources.

What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate the progress of pupils in mathematics, English and science, particularly that of the more able.
- Improve the use of day to day assessment to ensure work matches the needs of individual pupils more accurately.
- Ensure there is a more rigorous use of data in order to monitor the quality of teaching and learning.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory, but which have areas of underperformance, will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children's levels of skills on entry to the school are below those expected for their age. Despite some inconsistencies in progress throughout the school, the pupils make satisfactory progress and, by the end of Year 6, they attain broadly average standards. There has been a whole school focus on English and this has had a good impact on the standards in this subject. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills in other areas of the curriculum and often there are low expectations as to the quality of writing in these subjects. More able pupils do not always progress as quickly as they should. Pupils learning English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

There are some good aspects to this work within school. Behaviour throughout the school is good and the school has successfully implemented a range of strategies to tackle the challenging behaviour of a small number of Year 6 pupils. Pupils behave in an orderly and safe manner around school and play and work well with each other. They clearly enjoy being at school, which is reflected in the parents' views. Pupils are happy to see their teachers in the morning and they settle to their work very quickly. Attendance is satisfactory and the school is implementing a number of strategies to try to improve lateness, including 'Early Bird' weeks. The children clearly take pride in achieving their stickers for arriving at school on time. They have a satisfactory understanding of what a healthy life means. The school provides opportunities to develop their understanding with healthy school weeks and the use of the 'Trim Trail' during lunchtimes. Pupils know about staying safe, including a satisfactory understanding of the risks associated with alcohol, smoking and drugs. Pupils feel safe in school and say that the great majority behave sensibly. Social, moral and spiritual aspects of the school's life are all good,

and the link with the church is a strong dimension within the school's day. Pupils are prepared satisfactorily for the next stage of education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers have good relationships with pupils and successfully encourage pupils' positive attitudes and behaviour. The teachers' good use of resources, such as interactive whiteboards, enables pupils' interest and enthusiasm to be maintained. Whilst some teachers make effective use of assessment information to plan challenging activities for pupils, the process is inconsistent. Similarly, some teachers provide pupils with a clear picture of what they need to do to improve their work, but this good practice is not yet sufficiently widespread. Learning support assistants play a satisfactory role in ensuring pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities progress in line with their peers. There is an overuse of worksheets that do not challenge the pupils' learning and which inhibit opportunities to extend writing skills. Good support is provided for pupils learning English and the coordinator actively seeks effective ways to accelerate the progress of these pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum covers all subjects and there is good focus on the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics. Work has begun on developing a more relevant, skill based approach and, where this is in place, the outcomes for pupils are better. On occasions, the curriculum is too prescriptive and there are too few opportunities for pupils to carry out their own investigations in science. The school enhances the curriculum with educational visits, including a residential trip to Wales. There have also been some good enrichment days, including a visit by, amongst others, a professional footballer to support the 'Year of Reading' theme. Sporting opportunities are promoted through improving links with the local football team. The school has provided opportunities to participate in musical and drama activities such as taking part in the 'Cov Cool Kids' event at Warwick Arts Centre. The provision for developing the pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

All safeguarding checks are in place and child protection arrangements are secure and rigorous. There is good pastoral support provided by all the staff. The school links well with outside agencies, such as the behavioural support unit, to provide as much support as possible for the pupils. The support accessed through the authority for the increasing number of pupils learning English as an additional language is enabling them to have full access to the curriculum. Layered curriculum targets have been in place for some time and some teachers incorporate the targets into their practice, although the approach is inconsistent. These targets, whilst reflecting needs of groups of children, are not always closely matched to the needs of the individual.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Since her recent appointment, the headteacher has established a good relationship with parents who are appreciative of the opportunity to talk over their concerns. The headteacher has identified accurately clear and appropriate priorities for improvement of which both senior staff and the governing body are aware. There is a strong commitment to improvement. Senior staff are looking at strategies to improve the provision, for example the work on making the curriculum more exciting. Although it is too early to determine its impact. Subject and phase leaders demonstrate a good understanding of the data that tracks the pupils' progress. However, the use of this data is not rigorous enough to pose challenging questions about pupil progress or make judgments about consistencies in teaching and learning.

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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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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?	3

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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

16 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Osburg's Catholic Primary School, Coventry CV1 4AP

My colleague and I would like to thank you all for talking to us when we came to visit your school recently. You were all so polite and helpful and it was interesting to hear what you thought about the work that you have been doing and what it is like to be a pupil in your school.

We found that you are making satisfactory progress and reach standards that are similar to those seen in other schools. Your teachers have a clear understanding of where you are in your learning, but sometimes your work is not always as challenging as it could be. The teachers want you to do as well as you can and we have asked them to look at ways to challenge you further. We could see that you work hard at your writing in your literacy books, but that your writing is often not as good as it could be when you are writing in other subjects, such as history, geography and science.

A few of you thought that mathematics 'was too easy'. We think that sometimes you could tackle problems that are a bit more difficult and that will help you to progress more quickly.

The adults in school care about your welfare. They show that they think that it is important that you come to school every day and that you arrive on time. It was great to see so many of you getting all of your 'Early Bird' stickers and being proud to show that you were prompt. You miss so much if you are not in school and being late makes it more difficult to settle to your work. We are pleased you behave well and enjoy your work.

Your headteacher has not been with you very long and she has many plans to make your education more exciting and vibrant. We have asked the school leaders to help teachers make better use of the information about how well you are doing when planning your work. You can help to improve the school by continuing to work hard.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Susan E Lowry Lead inspector