

# St Bede's Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111688
<b>Local Authority</b>	Stockton-on-Tees
<b>Inspection number</b>	310663
<b>Inspection date</b>	4 July 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Earley

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	198
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Joan Edwards
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Elizabeth O'Hehir
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 July 2005
<b>School address</b>	Green Lane Stockton-on-Tees TS19 0DW
<b>Telephone number</b>	01642 678071
<b>Fax number</b>	01642 678071

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' progress, the effectiveness of assessment and tracking in helping to raise standards and the quality of teaching and learning. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

## Description of the school

St Bede's is a smaller than average primary school serving an area with high levels of social and economic deprivation close to the centre of Stockton. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is well above average. Most pupils are of White British heritage with a small number from minority ethnic groups. A small number of pupils learn English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. There is a small number of children who are looked after by the council. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools Gold Award, the Activemark, the Investors in People Award and the Silver Eco School Award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school that gives good value for money. Significant factors in this are the headteacher's very clear vision for improvement and the good use the school makes of assessment and tracking of progress to help to raise standards. This is enhanced by good personal development which gives pupils positive attitudes to learning.

Achievement is good and by the end of Year 6 standards are average. When children enter the Foundation Stage, their skills are usually below what is typical for their age. By the end of the Reception Year, most reach and some exceed the expected levels for their age. In 2007, the results of the teacher assessments in Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics were significantly above average. Pupils in the current Year 2 are on track to reach above average standards. In 2007, Year 6 results in the national tests in English, mathematics and science were average. Pupils in the current Year 6 are on track to reach similar standards. Pupils in Year 2 and in Year 6 had a different range of abilities when they joined the school; in both cases, achievement is good. Differences between the attainment at Year 2 and 6 reflect the disparities between year groups. Most pupils, of all ability make good progress. However, the progress that some of the more able pupils in Key Stage 2 make is not sufficiently rapid because they are not consistently challenged to extend their learning.

Personal development and well being, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles and, for example, join with parents in a 'Tall and Small' healthy cooking club. Pupils say that they really enjoy coming to school and feel safe and well cared for. They know how to look after themselves. Behaviour is good and pupils are polite and courteous. The school has put in place good procedures to raise attendance which is improving although it is still slightly below average. Pupils are keen to take responsibility and become good citizens. Mentors and buddies help other pupils and the school council helps to run the healthy tuck shop. Pupils play a full role in the life of the local community and parish, and have links with schools with pupils of other faiths. Older pupils take part in the Junior Neighbourhood Watch scheme and pupils raise funds for charities. Because pupils achieve well, are confident and have high self-esteem, they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Teaching and learning are good and this leads to good progress overall. However, in some lessons more able pupils are insufficiently challenged resulting in a slower rate of progress. Lessons are usually lively and interesting. For example, children in the Reception class enjoyed a stepping game that helped to improve their recognition of sounds and letters. Pupils make good use of opportunities to extend their learning by discussing work with partners and by reflecting on how well they are doing. This is enhanced by careful marking and clear targets for improvement. Good use is made of teaching assistants. They know pupils well and provide good support and encouragement. This is particularly helpful in enabling pupils who find learning difficult, those who learn English as an additional language and children who are looked after by the council to play a full part in lessons. Consequently they progress at the same rate as their peers.

The curriculum is good. The school has developed the curriculum to extend the use of skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology in other subjects. In this way, pupils see a relevance to their learning and make use of skills such as problem solving and working together. This is enhanced by weeks focused on areas such as cultural diversity, science

and myths and legends. There is a good programme of enrichment, including visits, visitors and out of school clubs which helps to increase enjoyment and extend learning. The impact of provision to support healthy lifestyles is good and good contacts with outside agencies help to extend the curriculum. Good links with the secondary school ensure that pupils' transfer to the next stage of education is usually a smooth one.

Care, guidance and support are good. Pupils and their families are well known to staff. This is a very caring school, based firmly on Christian principles. Pupils who may have emotional or personal problems are carefully supported through skilled nurturing and counselling. Relationships are very good and pupils are confident to approach an adult should they have a problem. There are close links with parents and most are very supportive of the school. Speaking for many, one parent commented that this is, 'A wonderful school with excellent staff'. The school does all that it can to ensure that pupils are safeguarded. Good systems for assessing and tracking progress give teachers and pupils a clear understanding of what they need to do in order to improve.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides strong leadership. She gives a clear and caring steer to the school and is well supported by her deputy. Staff and governors share a firm commitment to raising standards and improving provision. This leads to good achievement and personal development, and a strong sense of community where all are valued. Self-evaluation is thorough and forms the basis of clear development planning. Staff with subject responsibilities have a good understanding of their subjects but have insufficient opportunities to check teaching and learning in order to make improvements. Governance is good. Governors know the school well and are very supportive. They are keen to further extend their skills by participating in training. Good progress has been made since the last inspection. Strong leadership and a shared commitment to raise standards and improve provision give the school good capacity to improve further.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Provision in the Foundation stage is good and ensures pupils get off to a flying start. Children usually settle in very quickly because relationships are very good. Teaching is good and because teachers observe children closely and keep careful records of their progress, tasks are well suited to their abilities. The curriculum, both indoors and outside, is interesting and stimulating. It is well planned to give lots of practical experiences so that children enjoy learning and are challenged to extend their skills. There is a good balance between adult-directed activities and opportunities for choice. This helps to increase confidence and independence. Children are happy and enjoy learning because life in the Foundation Stage is fun. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed, and good links with Year 1 help to ensure continuity of learning.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise the standards and achievement of higher ability pupils in Key Stage 2.
- Provide more opportunities for subject leaders to monitor lessons in order to further improve 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?	2
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	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	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

<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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

7 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Bede's Catholic Primary School, Stockton-on-Tees,

TS19 0DW

Thank you for your friendly welcome when I came to inspect your school. Your school is good and this is why you learn well and enjoy coming to school. I was impressed by the way the school council run the tuck shop and was pleased to hear that you know about the importance of plenty of exercise and healthy eating in order to keep fit and well. The mentors and buddies do a good job in helping to look after others in school and your behaviour is good. You do a lot to help charities and people who live locally.

Here are some of the things your school does well:

- lessons are lively and interesting so that most of you make good progress
- the school takes good care of you and keeps a good check on how well you are doing
- there are lots of interesting visits, visitors and after-school clubs and these help you to enjoy school and improve your learning
- every one is very friendly and you get on well with each other and look after each other well
- the school helps you to become good citizens who help others in and out of school.

These are some of the things the school is going to do to get even better:

- give more help to pupils in Key Stage 2 who learn quicker so that more of them reach the higher levels
- give teachers more opportunities to see how well you are doing in the different subjects so that they can help you to improve more.

Thank you once again for making me welcome and for your kindness and courtesy.

Yours sincerely

David Earley

Lead inspector