

# St Alban's Catholic Primary School, Chaddesden, Derby

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112927
<b>Local Authority</b>	City of Derby LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	311056
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Geof Timms

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	333
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs C Cuomo
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr M Booton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 March 2004
<b>School address</b>	Newstead Avenue Chaddesden Derby Derbyshire DE21 6NU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01332 673823
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## Introduction

The school is larger than average and, because it is a Catholic school, it takes pupils from a wide area to the east of Derby city centre. While pupils come from different socio-economic backgrounds, the proportion eligible for free school meals is below average. Pupils' attainment on entry is often below the level expected for their age. Although most pupils are from a White British background, there are a small number of pupils from a wide range of different minority ethnic backgrounds. A small number have Shona, Latvian or Philippino as their first language and they are at an early stage of learning English. There is a broadly average proportion of the pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, mainly moderate learning difficulties. The school has had a significant level of disruption to staffing in recent years and this has affected both provision and outcomes.

## Description of the school

The school is providing its pupils with a satisfactory and improving education. There are good features in personal development and the care shown throughout the school. There has been a lot of change and disruption, caused by a high turnover of teaching staff, both permanent and temporary in recent years. Parents have been understandably concerned about this. However, this has been beyond the control of the school and staff have worked hard to lessen the impact on pupils' learning by supporting each other and inducting temporary staff well.

Current standards in reading and mathematics are average in Year 2, although standards in writing are well below average. In Year 6, standards are broadly average in reading and writing, but well below average in mathematics. Standards in science are average and improving. Overall, achievement is satisfactory. The school has put a lot of work into improving pupils' writing and this is beginning to have a positive impact on standards, especially in Key Stage 2. The achievement of boys and that of the more able pupils remains below that expected, as do standards in writing in Key Stage 1 and mathematics in Key Stage 2.

The disruption to staffing has made it difficult to maintain consistency in the provision. Teaching and learning are satisfactory but there are examples of good teaching throughout the school. Where the teaching is strongest, teachers have good relationships with their pupils, resulting in attentive learners and pupils who are willing to take a full part in lessons. Weaker teaching is evident where time is not used well and tasks are not completed. Work is not always sufficiently challenging, especially for the more able pupils, and the marking of pupils' work does not always help them see what they need to do to improve. However, one of the school's strengths is the willingness of staff to seek help and try to raise standards. A very good example of this is the work with boys' writing in Year 2, which is already improving attitudes and increasing vocabulary. The curriculum is satisfactory. The school is working to ensure it is relevant to pupils and that useful links between subjects make learning meaningful.

Pupils' personal development is good. They understand how to keep themselves healthy and safe. Parents and pupils say that children enjoy school and they have a typical range of opportunities to contribute to their own and the wider community. Currently skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) mean that pupils are satisfactorily prepared for their future lives. This is a caring school and the level of pastoral care is good. All requirements for keeping children safe are met. The school has recently developed good systems for setting more challenging whole school targets although these are yet to have sufficient impact on standards.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Improvements made since the last inspection have shown that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve. The work done to raise standards in writing is beginning to prove successful and the monitoring of teaching has resulted in an improved awareness of strengths and weaknesses. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior staff know what needs to improve and the school's self-evaluation is honest and accurate. The governing body provides good support for the school. It has not monitored the standards and performance of the school rigorously enough.

**Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The children in the Nursery and Reception classes make good progress towards the levels expected of them because of good teaching, careful planning and effective tracking of their learning. Staff work well together and have a clear understanding of their roles. The outdoor resources are good and the use of these is developing well, especially in helping to provide appropriate role-play opportunities to encourage boys' writing. Children are provided with a good mix of teacher-led and self-chosen activities. The good aspects of the Foundation Stage are appreciated by parents who are very pleased with the start their children make to school life.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

The children in the Nursery and Reception classes make good progress towards the levels expected of them because of good teaching, careful planning and effective tracking of their learning. Staff work well together and have a clear understanding of their roles. The outdoor resources are good and the use of these is developing well, especially in helping to provide appropriate role-play opportunities to encourage boys' writing. Children are provided with a good mix of teacher-led and self-chosen activities. The good aspects of the Foundation Stage are appreciated by parents who are very pleased with the start their children make to school life.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics at Key Stage 2 and in writing in Key Stage 1.
- Improve the achievement of boys and of the more able pupils.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring time is used more efficiently and pupils know what they need to do to improve.
- Develop the role of the governing body as critical friends to ensure they hold the school sufficiently to account.

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

Overall, most pupils make satisfactory progress through the school. The school has worked hard to raise standards in writing and this is having a clear impact in Key Stage 2. The current Year 6 pupils have made good progress over the past two years and the standard of their writing is in line with expectations. This is due to the school's work in raising standards through a range of new ideas to encourage pupils to write. However, writing in Key Stage 1 remains below average although recent changes to teaching are beginning to show improvement. Standards in reading are higher and are in line with those expected. Standards in mathematics are currently average in Year 2 but well below average in Year 6. The school is trying hard to ensure boys achieve as well as they can but there remains a bigger gap between boys' and girls' achievement than is the case nationally. The school has also found it difficult to ensure sufficient pupils

reach the higher levels and this remains a focus for improvement. The pupils with moderate learning difficulties, and those at an early stage of learning English, make satisfactory progress.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. One parent said: 'There is a really strong moral ethos at the school which is helping our children to develop into caring and thoughtful young people.' As a result of the school's strong Catholic ethos, most pupils are confident, respond well to adults and are supportive of each other. Pupils know right from wrong and are responsible individuals. Their behaviour is good and attendance is satisfactory. Pupils show initiative and the school council are proud of their part in making the school a better place. Their setting up of peer mediators and 'mini leaders', are good examples of this. Pupil's enjoyment and ability to work with and care for others is shown clearly in the 'prayer partner' scheme. This involves the youngest and oldest pupils in the school working together on a joint task. Pupils develop a good understanding of how to lead healthy lives partly through their involvement in the school's exercise programme each morning.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and this reflects well on the efforts of staff during a period of significant disruption. Good teaching is evident in parts of the school and is characterised by positive relationships that encourage pupils to behave well and take a full and active part in their learning. Planning is effective and the teachers are making good use of new technology such as the interactive whiteboards. The good teaching has helped standards in writing improve by the end of Year 6. Teaching assistants often provide good support for pupils, especially those with moderate learning difficulties or who are learning English. Where teaching is weaker it does not sufficiently challenge more able pupils, lacks a lively pace and does not make the best use of time. There are examples of very good marking of pupils' work, such as that in Year 2 writing books. However, this is inconsistent between teachers and across subjects.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

Staff are developing a curriculum that is enjoyable, meaningful and relevant, and provides pupils with the skills and qualities they need to succeed in secondary school. However, the provision for gifted and talented pupils is limited. Pupils enjoy their lessons, particularly those afternoons led by teaching assistants, when there is a range of practical activities. However, planning for this does not show how it links to the National Curriculum or how tasks will enable pupils to build on their knowledge, skills and understanding across the year groups. Intervention programmes for pupils needing extra support with literacy and numeracy have recently started but there is no discernible impact on standards yet. For pupils with moderate learning difficulties, there are good additional programmes, such as speech therapy. There is satisfactory enrichment. A good variety of after-school clubs, especially for Key Stage 2 pupils, adds interest and enjoyment because of the opportunities to socialise and take part in sports.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 2

The high level of pastoral care emanates from the school's religious character and strong caring ethos. Pupils' welfare and safety has a high priority and there are appropriate steps taken to ensure procedures for child protection, health and safety, anti-racism and anti-bullying are implemented. As a result, pupils feel valued, safe, well supported and they enjoy school. One said: 'Children have fun yet still learn'. Attendance is monitored closely with the school working well with the education welfare officer. Pupils' targets set to raise their achievement are not used consistently by teachers and, as a result, pupils are not always clear about what they need to do to improve their work. The learning mentor is available to all pupils and works effectively with individual pupils and parents during the week.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The headteacher has dealt well with the high turnover of teaching staff with the support of his deputy and senior management team. They have lessened the impact of temporary teachers through good induction and have worked to improve the quality of all teachers through providing advice and support. Teachers have too little opportunity to see good practice in order to raise standards across the school. Senior managers know that standards are not high enough and they take steps to help all pupils do as well as they should. Ways to check how successful the school is have been put in place although this is at an early stage and its impact is only evident in standards in writing at Key Stage 2. The senior management team are aware of the need to do more to make sure that the teaching is good. They are developing a more effective system for checking of planning, observation of teaching and a better picture of what is being achieved in each subject. Governors are supportive and committed to improvement. However, they have not yet developed an effective system for challenging the school's performance and holding the school to account, although they do ensure good pupil care and personal development.

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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 <sup>1</sup> 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?	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	3
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

<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>	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**

14 February 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of St Alban's Catholic Primary School, Chaddesdon, Derby, DE21 6NU

Thank you very much for making us welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our visit and you were very helpful, especially in sharing with us your views of school.

You enjoy school and like taking part in the various activities provided for you. You behave well and work hard. This helps your teachers teach you and helps you learn. A lot of you have had a number of different teachers recently and this has not helped you make as much progress as you might otherwise have done. However, most of you are making satisfactory progress, although in some classes writing and mathematics could be better. The work the school is doing to improve your writing is succeeding and you are now beginning to make good progress.

We have asked Mr Booton and your teachers to do these things to help you improve your progress.

- Help you get better at writing in Years 1 and 2, and get better at mathematics in Years 3 to 6.
- Help the boys and those of you who find learning easy to make better progress.
- Help teachers use time more efficiently and use their marking to set better targets for you all.
- The governors should spend more time finding out how well the school is doing and whether standards are high enough.

Thank you again for your help. Enjoy your time at St Alban's and keep working hard!

Yours sincerely

Geof Timms

Lead inspector