

St Walburga's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113898
Local Authority	Bournemouth
Inspection number	311423
Inspection date	12 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Michael Barron

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	415
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	60
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Patricia Marchiori
Headteacher	Robert Dare
Date of previous school inspection	13 September 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Malvern Road Bournemouth BH9 3BY
Telephone number	01202 528811

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	12 November 2008
Inspection number	311423

Fax number

01202 532875

Age group	4-11
Inspection date	12 November 2008
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

How well pupils presently achieve, especially in numeracy, literacy and science in Year 2 and Year 6.

The quality and impact of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision.

The quality of care, guidance and support, especially academic guidance and support.

Pupils' awareness and understanding of the multicultural nature of modern British society.

The inspectors gathered evidence from discussions with pupils, staff and representatives from the governing body, observations of teaching and of pupils at work and at play, scrutiny of school documentation and self-evaluation, samples of pupils' work and an analysis of parent questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not inspected in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school. The school admits children from a very wide catchment area, equivalent to over a third of the size of the Bournemouth local authority. Pupils come from a wide variety of socio-economic backgrounds. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and the percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is similar to the national average. Very few pupils are eligible for free school meals. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than the national average, as is the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational need. The school has secured Healthy School Status, the Green Schools Award, the Activemark award and Investors in People status. The school's accommodation has been extended and improved since the last inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. It provides an excellent education for pupils. Standards are well above average and pupils' achievement is outstanding. An overwhelming majority of parents believe St Walburga's is an excellent school and appreciate the outstanding quality of education it provides for their children. 'We are privileged our children attend this fantastic school,' is typical of the many positive comments from parents.

At the heart of the school's success are outstanding leadership and management at all levels, plus high quality teaching linked to an excellent curriculum which meets the needs of all pupils very well. However, the school is not complacent and constantly analyses its performance rigorously to ensure that any gaps in learning are quickly identified so that improvement strategies can be put swiftly in place. It is clear that the school demonstrates an outstanding capacity for further improvement.

Staff and pupils describe their school as a friendly place with a strong sense of community where everyone gets on very well together. Pupils feel safe and secure and know there is always someone to turn to if they have a problem. They are confident that any extremely rare instances of anti-social actions by others will be dealt with quickly and fairly. As a result, their enjoyment of school is outstanding and this is reflected in their above average attendance and in their excellent behaviour and attitudes. As one pupil put it, 'This is a brilliant school and you have no worries.' Pupils take their responsibilities seriously and fully understand the importance of keeping safe and of the need to make sensible and healthy choices. The quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils' appreciation of the multicultural nature of modern British society, judged to be in need of improvement by the previous inspection, is very well developed to the point that pupils are at ease discussing the philosophies of people living in this country, or abroad, who are from different cultural backgrounds than their own.

The curriculum has been designed to ensure learning is relevant, purposeful and enjoyable. The high standard of pupils' work on display provides clear evidence that the school's success is not just restricted to test results. Pupils say they look forward to lessons, especially when they involve practical work in subjects such as information and communication technology (ICT). They talk excitedly about the range of popular after-school activities the school provides for them while a variety of visitors to the school, and visits to places of interest within the local community and beyond, build up their knowledge of the wider world. However, even though pupils are well prepared academically for the next stage of their education, their awareness of the role of business and enterprise in society is limited, despite the school having developed very effective working relationships with a local bank in order to promote pupils' understanding of money management.

Following an excellent start to their education in the EYFS, pupils' standards at the beginning of Year 1 are generally above average. Pupils go on to make outstanding progress across the rest of the school because teaching is outstanding and caters very effectively for the needs of all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for pupils whose first language is not English. As a result, these pupils make the same outstanding progress as all others. Lessons are very well structured and pupils comment that teachers are approachable and always try to make lessons interesting. Very effective teaching assistants ensure pupils requiring extra support are always provided with the help they need to succeed. Pupils find

teachers' marking very helpful and appreciate that teachers always try to ensure that they understand how to improve their work. As a result, the standards pupils attain in the national assessments and tests in English, mathematics and science, in both Year 2 and Year 6, have been significantly above the national average for a number of years. It is no surprise that pupils presently in these year groups are well on course to exceed the challenging targets set for them in the 2009 national tests.

The level of care, guidance and support for pupils is excellent and is the basis for pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being. Parents are very positive in their appreciation of the way the school looks after their children and comment about the 'exceptional caring environment' the school provides. Effective induction and transfer arrangements help pupils settle quickly into new routines. Health and well-being are securely safeguarded and child protection procedures meet current government requirements. Academic guidance is of excellent quality. Procedures to track pupils' progress are very effective and used very well to set individual pupils challenging targets for improvement.

The headteacher is a dedicated and visionary leader who works in close partnership with his deputy headteacher and with the school's senior leadership team to ensure that inconsistencies in pupils' learning are quickly addressed. He receives excellent support from the governing body, which fulfils its statutory duties very well and offers the school a very convincing level of challenge. Individual governors play an important role in school affairs. They bring with them a high level of expertise and take their responsibilities very seriously.

Parents appreciate their views are regularly sought and acted upon. Resources are very good and used effectively. Links with external agencies support pupils' learning very well.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The words of one parent summed up the outstanding quality of the school's EYFS. 'My child is happy going to school and full of excitement at the end of the day.'

Children enter the school's Reception year from a very broad range of backgrounds and with wide variations in their skill development. A small number usually start school with skills in line with typical age-related expectations. However, in recent years, an increasing number of children have entered with school with skills lower than the expected level for their age, especially in relation to their social and language development.

Children achieve highly in all areas of learning regardless of their abilities because outstanding teaching caters exceptionally well for their needs. This represents a marked improvement from the last academic year when the school recognised some children were not making the progress they were capable of. It is to the credit of the leadership and management of the school and, in particular, to the outstanding leadership of the EYFS, that the school quickly developed and implemented very effective strategies to improve this situation. Children now make outstanding progress and an example of this can be seen in the way those children who entered the school with below, and sometimes well below, typically expected social skills in September have made very rapid progress in their social development and now work well with other children in total harmony.

Classrooms are colourful, stimulating places and teachers use a wide range of strategies to capture children's imaginations and add to their enjoyment of learning. Lessons blend opportunities for children to work independently and with adult direction. Recording of progress

is thorough and used exceptionally well to plan future work. Teachers and teaching assistants ensure there is a very strong emphasis on children's welfare at all times.

Progress in personal development and well-being is excellent. Children happily share and take turns while joining in lesson activities with enthusiasm. Regular visits to interesting places build up children's understanding of the world in which they live. A further range of interesting activities helps to ensure that most children are on course to exceed expectations in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' awareness of the role of business and enterprise in modern society.

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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?	1
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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

13 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Walburga's Catholic Primary School, Bournemouth BH9 3BY

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. Everyone was very friendly and we both soon realised why you like your school so much. We enjoyed talking to you about what you like the most about school and seeing you all working very well in lessons. Your parents believe that St Walburga's is an outstanding school and we fully agree with them. Here are some of the things we particularly like about your school:

- Your teachers always try to make lessons really interesting and this helps you to make outstanding progress and reach high standards.
- You really enjoy everything about your school, especially taking part in the wide range of after-school activities the school provides for you.
- Your personal development is excellent, your behaviour is outstanding and you are very friendly, caring and polite.
- Your headteacher, teachers and governors lead and manage the school excellently.

We believe your headteacher and teachers can make your school even better. We have asked them to:

- Improve your awareness and understanding of the role of business and enterprise in modern society.

You can help your school by continuing to work hard.

We wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Barron Lead inspector