

Our Lady and St Edward's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122784
Local Authority	City of Nottingham
Inspection number	314399
Inspection date	7 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Keith Edwards

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	230
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	26
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Ross Marshall
Headteacher	Mrs Moira Dales
Date of previous school inspection	29 June 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Gordon Road St Ann's Nottingham Nottinghamshire NG3 2GL

Age group	3–11
Inspection date	7 October 2008
Inspection number	314399

Telephone number

01159155800

Fax number

01159155801

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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: pupils' achievement and standards, personal development and well-being, teaching and learning and leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation, national published assessment data, the previous Ofsted report, and the school's records of progress over time. A range of school documents, particularly assessment data and the questionnaires returned by parents, were scrutinised. The inspectors looked at parts of lessons, met staff, pupils, the chair of governors and a representative of the local authority.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector discussed at length the school's own assessments, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This Catholic Primary School serves the parish of St Ann's close to the city centre of Nottingham. Most of the pupils live locally. Although the majority of pupils are of White British heritage, many ethnicities are represented and an increasing number of pupils have English as an additional language. Attainment on entry is below national expectations, and often well below in language acquisition and aspects of their personal development. The proportion of children entitled to a free school meal and the proportion with learning difficulties/and or disabilities is above average. The school has an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) unit where the children can start on a part-time basis after their third birthday

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 provides good value for money. It has improved significantly since the last inspection, particularly since the arrival of the new headteacher and is well placed to maintain this momentum. One delighted parent whose views are echoed by many others commented, 'I am extremely pleased with St Edward's. I believe the school maintains excellent standards of behaviour and manners. I feel that all of the teachers and staff are compassionate, working hard to ensure that such a diverse set of pupils feel comfortable and confident. The new headteacher has brought many positive changes, whilst keeping in line with the school's religious ethos'. The school has gained the respect of the community that it serves and works well with other schools and agencies, particularly to support curriculum development.

Children achieve well in the nursery and reception classes. This is because they are nurtured in a stimulating environment and are enabled to build confidence as learners. The skills that the children acquire in the EYFS provide them with a secure footing for future learning in Key Stage 1 and very positive attitudes towards school. Pupils continue to make good progress in the infant classes because they are well taught, particularly in Year 2. Standards are rising again in the infant classes after test results in 2007 showed a marked dip in pupil performance. However, the 2008 cohort of Year 2 pupils contained a high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and or disabilities and although they achieved well, they were unable to reach the expected standard. In both key stages, standards in reading are consistently higher than those in writing and mathematics. Overall standards in Year 6 in English and science are broadly in line with the national average. Written work is much improved because the school has modified its approach and pupils are now encouraged to write in different styles. Furthermore, ambitious targets have been set for the oldest pupils and they are clear about how to reach them. Standards in numeracy are not as good as those in literacy. This is because there have been too few opportunities for pupils to apply their developing skills and the curriculum has left gaps in the pupils' knowledge and understanding. Throughout the school, pupils with learning difficulties receive sensitive support, which enables them to make progress in line with that of others. Boys and girls now achieve equally well, following a period of some underachievement by the boys.

Pupils' personal development is good. Attendance rates are above the national average and pupils arrive punctually. Pupils report that they enjoy school and feel safe and secure. Incidents of poor behaviour are rare. Pupils develop a good understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle. They value the care shown to them and feel increasingly involved in making decisions, particularly through regular meetings of the school council. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a good understanding of their own traditions and an enhanced awareness of cultural diversity in contemporary society because of the diverse ethnicities represented in the school population. Parents testify that by the time their children leave Our Lady and St Edward's they are very well prepared for the next phase of their education. They are mature individuals who have acquired secure social skills and are confident learners. They have sound academic skills and their competent information and communication technology (ICT) skills assist their future economic well-being.

The quality of teaching and learning is good with real strengths in the classes for the oldest pupils in each key stage. Relationships are good and help to promote enjoyment and positive attitudes to learning. Lesson planning is detailed and where teaching is most effective, there is a good emphasis on practical activities designed to make pupils think. In less effective lessons there is an overuse of commercially produced worksheets. Pupils understand the purpose of

their lessons and the school has developed a good system to assess their progress. However, this information is not yet used consistently to challenge all groups of pupils and not all teachers give clear feedback to pupils about how well they have done and how they might improve their work. This occasionally results in pupils making less progress than they could. Pupils enjoy learning with computers and the newly installed interactive whiteboards are used well. Teaching assistants provide valuable support, particularly for those pupils who find learning difficult

The curriculum strongly supports the pupils' personal development with many valuable opportunities to promote their well-being. A key strength of the curriculum are the strong roots in the school's Catholic traditions and the effective links with the community, particularly through the church that enable pupils to develop a sense of their place in society. Music plays a key part in the life of the school and strongly supports the pupils' personal development. The teaching of Spanish is securely embedded in the school's curriculum and is very well received by pupils. A further strength is the programme of well-chosen visits, visiting speakers and the range of activities beyond the school day that support pupils' personal development.

Pastoral support for pupils is good. Parents and pupils appreciate the efforts made to ensure that all feel safe, secure and valued. Procedures for health and safety and risk assessment are secure. Pupils are happy in school, but know there is always someone they can turn to if in difficulty. Assessment systems are good. There are good procedures to track pupils' progress and this data is being used increasingly to match work to pupils' differing abilities. However, there remains scope to extend these procedures so that the marking of pupils' work is more closely tuned to their personal targets to enable them to take more responsibility for their learning, particularly the higher attaining pupils.

Leadership and management of the school are good. The new headteacher has energy, verve and determination and she has spent her first two terms productively in building relationships to secure the teamwork of the staff and a shared accountability for school performance. The school's self evaluation documentation portrays an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. It has informed a clear strategy for continuing improvement. Assessment procedures have been refined and a more integrated curriculum has been introduced. The priorities detailed in the school improvement plan, based on a clear evaluation of its contribution to the broader community, are entirely appropriate. The quality of governance is satisfactory. The governors provide loyal support and have a growing recognition that they need to develop their procedures to gauge the school's effectiveness and to be more closely involved in its strategic development.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The EYFS is well led and managed. The teaching areas are well organised to encourage appropriate play-based learning both inside and out and the school are further developing the outdoor area to provide optimum benefit for the children. Good relationships and effective transition arrangements ensure that children are settled, happy and secure and seek help when needed. They learn to share and play together well and their behaviour is good. Parents are actively involved through discussions and meetings and are kept well informed through the weekly diary which shows work done in the EYFS Unit. There is a good emphasis on literacy and numeracy and children learn through practical activities such as role playing in shops and counting bean bags thrown into hoops, as well as through focused group sessions. As a result children make good progress, particularly in their communication skills. Assessment arrangements are thorough and a good range of strategies are used to help children to learn. Children's progress is tracked and monitored effectively and staff plan as a team to ensure that all children's

needs are catered for. Photographs are used to develop individual portfolios for the children and children enjoy talking about what they have been doing. These assessments show that most children make good gains in their learning to attain the expected levels at the end of their Reception year.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing and mathematics.
- Develop the role of the governing body.

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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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/or disabilities make progress	2

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?	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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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 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

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 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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	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

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

8 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Our Lady and St Edward's Catholic Primary School, Nottingham, NG3 2LG.

We really enjoyed our visit to your school this month because everybody was so helpful and friendly. We particularly enjoyed our discussions with you and hearing your views. It was also delightful to be able to work with you in your classrooms, take part in your assembly, meet the school council and see you playing games outside. I can understand why you are proud of your school as there are many things that make it special. Here are some of them:

- You do well in your work and make good progress.
- You have a good attitude towards school and you behave very well.
- The school is very mindful to keep you safe and happy.
- Your teachers work well to make sure you are kept busy.
- The school provides a wide range of activities to keep you interested.
- Mrs Dales is determined to make sure the school gets better and better.

You are fortunate to be able to attend such a good school as Our Lady and St Edward's. It is really important that you continue to work hard and make the most of the opportunities the school provides. I have found one or two matters that should help the school to become even better when they have been attended to. Firstly, although you achieve well, the school needs to help you to do a little better with your writing and your mathematics. Also, I would like the governors to become more involved in the school so they can help even more with school improvements.

I would like to wish you all the very best for the future.

Keith Edwards

Lead inspector