

St Cuthbert and The First Martyrs' Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107335
Local Authority	Bradford
Inspection number	324564
Inspection date	25 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Keith Bardon

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)	237
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	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Clare Buffingham
Headteacher	Mrs Angela Phillips
Date of previous school inspection	14 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Scotchman Road Manningham Bradford West Yorkshire BD9 5AT

Age group	3–11
Inspection date	25 September 2008
Inspection number	324564

Telephone number
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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' achievement, teaching and learning, care, guidance and support, and leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation, national published assessment data and the school's own assessment records, policies and minutes, observation of the school at work, interviews with senior members of staff and pupils, and the parents' questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest the school's own assessments, as given in the self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

This average sized primary school is situated just outside the city ring road in a district that has a measure of social disadvantage. Pupils are drawn from a wide area around the city and have diverse home and cultural backgrounds. While the majority of pupils are White British, two fifths are from a range of minority ethnic heritages. Over a quarter of pupils speak English as an additional language, although only a small number are at an early stage in learning the language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement for their special educational needs is above average but the number with a statement for their special needs is below average. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision includes Nursery and Reception classes. Since it was last inspected the school has had a change of headteacher and the deputy headteacher has recently joined on a temporary appointment. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools and Sportsmark awards as well as the football and drugs charters. Breakfast and homework clubs are available to pupils and the school provides learning support for parents.

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 which has some good features. Following careful analysis by the relatively new headteacher the school has gained a realistic view of its strengths and weaknesses. Well constructed development plans are in place and staff and governors are working closely together to increase the school's effectiveness. These plans are at quite an early stage of implementation. The school's capacity to improve in the future is currently satisfactory.

Pupils' personal development is good. They are very happy at school because, 'the teachers are really friendly and you can go to them if you have a problem'. Parents hold equally positive views describing the school as, 'very welcoming', and one which, 'provides a caring and supportive learning environment'. Because they work hard, pay close attention to what is said to them and follow the guidance they are given very carefully, pupils attain standards that are often above average by Year 6 and they do well in the national tests. However, because the quality of teaching varies widely between classes, pupils' make uneven progress as they move through the school and so their achievement overall is satisfactory.

At its most effective, lively and interesting teaching generates a fast pace of learning, however, at the other end of the spectrum there are lessons which fail to provide the learning opportunities pupils need and they achieve too little. Teachers assess pupils' work regularly. Some teachers use the information this produces well to match work to pupils' differing abilities but on too many occasions, the tasks pupils are set have too broad a base and do not provide sufficient challenge for all pupils. Following on from the good start they get in EYFS, pupils who speak English as an additional language generally make good progress in their language development. Although a little formal, the curriculum provides a solid platform for pupils' learning and the many enrichment opportunities are valued and much enjoyed by the pupils.

Pupils attend regularly, behave well and show respect for staff and each other. They are confident that theirs is a school without bullies and that any 'falling out' will be quickly dealt with. Pupils of all ages show a very clear understanding of what they need to do to stay healthy and fit and they are aware of dangers in the outside world. They enjoy opportunities to contribute to school through the school council and readily raise funds for those less fortunate than themselves. Preparation for future learning and life is good. Older pupils are looking forward to high school, confident that they will do well. The school plays an important part in the local and wider communities. By working with other schools, pupils are provided with good opportunities to recognise and appreciate the diversities of the world in which they live. The richness of the school's own community is celebrated and the manner in which pupils from diverse cultural and home backgrounds work and play happily together is a pleasure to see. A good number of pupils learn to play a musical instrument and the very proficient school choir gives pleasure to many.

Pupils receive sensitive and effective pastoral care and feel safe and secure in the school's warm atmosphere. Procedures for safeguarding pupils meet requirements.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive satisfactory support and guidance, although there is a little confusion between those who have difficulties with learning and those whose learning is affected by a lack of English. The support pupils receive for their academic development through teacher's marking and other guidance is satisfactory. They are set individual targets but have yet to be given clear guidance on how to use them to improve their work and to judge for themselves how well they are doing.

The headteacher gives the school clear direction and a sense of purpose. Since her appointment a little over a year ago she has strengthened and added to the school's management procedures so that the school has better information to inform decision making. These systems are starting to function effectively, but many have yet to be fully established in the school's routines. Because of a lack of opportunity, many of the other senior members of staff have little experience of school evaluation and strategic decision making. Consequently, the contribution they make to school management and to raising achievement is rather limited, but increasing as their skills develop. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory overall; it is good in some parts such as the EYFS but much steadier in others. Since the last inspection governors have become far more involved in checking the school's work and challenging it to do even better. They have a realistic view of the school and support senior leaders in making the necessary changes.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

When children enter the Nursery their attainment is a little below that typical of the age group and many are not yet speaking English or socialising with others confidently. As a result of good teaching, children make good progress in EYFS in all areas of learning and particularly in communication, language and literacy. By the end of their time in Reception most children have attained the targets for their age and are ready to move on to the National Curriculum. Children who speak English as an additional language receive sensitive encouragement to speak in English and to listen carefully to others. As a result, most become confident in the language during their time in EYFS. The quality of provision is good and has improved well since the last inspection. The Nursery and Reception classes work cohesively as a unit so that transition is seamless and children's learning progresses logically and systematically. Management of the EYFS is good. All staff have clear roles and responsibilities which they carry out diligently. Children's progress and development are monitored closely and lesson planning stems logically from the information staff have collected. The school pays close attention to children's welfare and the required procedures are followed. Links with home are good and parents speak highly of their communication with staff.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching to ensure that in all lessons pupils have work that is stimulating, challenging and well matched to their abilities.
- Provide pupils with clearer guidance on what they are expected to achieve and what they have to do to meet these expectations so they are involved in judging their progress.
- Increase the contribution made by senior staff to strategic leadership and management.

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.

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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?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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?	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/or disabilities make progress	3

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?	3
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?	3

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 eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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

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

Inspection of St Cuthbert and the First Martyrs' Catholic Primary School, Bradford, BD9 5AT

Thank you very much for the very friendly greeting you gave me when I visited your school recently. Lots of you smiled and chatted to me and I felt comfortable and welcome. I thoroughly enjoyed finding out about the work you do and a special thanks to those who talked with me about the school.

St Cuthbert and the First Martyrs' is a satisfactory school with some good features. It was nice to hear that you enjoy school and feel comfortable approaching staff if you have a problem or need help. Your behaviour is good and you can be proud of the way in which you help around school and help each other. It is clear that you develop into sensible and responsible young people. I was particularly impressed by how well you all got on together and the sensitivity you show towards those who have particular difficulties.

When I visited lessons I was pleased to see most pupils concentrating and trying their best. Year 6 pupils traditionally do well in the national tests and I hope this will continue. Children get a good start in Nursery and Reception but how well this is built upon varies from class to class. While some of the teaching is good and you all make satisfactory progress during your time at the school, there are aspects which could be better. I have suggested that teachers need to check carefully that the work that they plan matches the abilities of everyone in the class.

The personal care staff provide for you is good. The guidance you are given to help your learning is satisfactory, but it would help if you were more involved in judging progress for yourselves. This is something I have asked the school to look into.

Under the headteacher's guidance some of the teachers are taking on more leadership responsibilities and they need to continue to develop their skills to help them in this work.

Thank you once again for a very enjoyable day and I wish you lots of luck in the future.