

# St Augustine's Catholic Primary School and Nursery

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108399
<b>Local Authority</b>	Gateshead
<b>Inspection number</b>	324762
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gianna Ulyatt

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.

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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 (total)	0
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Miss Geraldine Spoors
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Carolyn Duffy
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 October 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Colegate Leam Lane Gateshead Tyne and Wear NE10 8PP

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 October 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	324762

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**Age group** 3-11

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**Inspection dates** 6-7 October 2008

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**Inspection number** 324762

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

St Augustine's Catholic Primary is a larger than average school situated within a large social housing estate in Gateshead. The school serves an area where very few adults have higher education. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average and very few are at an early stage of speaking English. The number of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with statements of educational need, is broadly average.

## 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. The majority of parents are rightly pleased with the progress their children make and the high levels of personal care. One parent, who speaks for many, states, 'My child is in good hands when I leave each day.' The school has developed good partnerships with a variety of organisations to promote the personal development and academic advancement of all its pupils.

A strong religious ethos and very good relationships between staff and pupils create a happy, caring and supportive atmosphere in which pupils thrive. Pupils' outstanding spiritual development is supported through close links with the church community. Pupils show great sensitivity towards those in their own community and beyond. They know how to maintain a healthy lifestyle and many enjoy the extra physical and creative activities provided. The development of pupils' basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) prepares them well for their futures. Some are ambitious enough to be already thinking about going to university and about having a professional career.

Standards are broadly average by the age of seven and eleven and this represents good achievement as pupils start school with skills much lower than is usual. Progress through Years 1 to 6 is good overall, but variations in the quality of teaching and learning in some classes cause it to be uneven. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress and their attainment is broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. At the lower end of Key Stage 2, progress slows down especially in writing and mathematics, and this creates gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. Progress accelerates at the upper end of Key Stage 2 and much is done to raise standards but some gaps in learning remain and this is preventing standards improving year on year. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities progress well. Pupils from minority ethnic groups achieve exceptionally well in both key stages.

Teaching and learning are good overall. In most lessons, pupils make good progress. Teachers use technology effectively to introduce new learning and this helps lessons run smoothly. Teachers plan well, question carefully and encourage pupils to discuss new ideas. This has a good impact on speaking and listening skills. Pupils particularly like the way most teachers mark their work and set them individual targets. They say, 'The comments really help improve our work.' Pupils are well cared for and their academic progress is well monitored. The introduction of rigorous tracking and assessment procedures is having a positive impact on attainment. However, the procedures are not consistently applied across Key Stage 2. Therefore in some lessons the work is not matched accurately enough to pupils' needs and progress slows down. The innovative curriculum inspires pupils, broadens their horizons and increases their love for learning. Corridors throughout the school are vibrant with pupils' work and classrooms display essential information to assist pupils during lessons.

Leadership and management are good. The strong and determined leadership of the relatively new headteacher has made sure that standards have been maintained throughout a period of serious disruption when more than half the staff retired or moved to promoted positions elsewhere. The headteacher has set out an extremely clear vision for the school that is shared by all staff and is firmly based on maintaining a positive ethos and improving standards to ensure all pupils achieve well. The senior leadership team has brought about radical changes and their effectiveness is already evident in the improvements in attainment in the Early Years

Foundation Stage (EYFS) and in Key Stage 1. Governors are loyal and highly committed to the school. They make a good contribution to the school's place in the parish and local community

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Provision in the EYFS is good. Children get off to a good start and achieve well in a happy, safe and attractive learning environment. High levels of care begin with home visits before children start in the Nursery. This helps them settle quickly into school. All areas of learning are very well provided for both indoors and out so children are well motivated to learn in ways that suit them best. Adults interact sensitively, observe children's development carefully, record what they see and then use the information well to plan the next learning steps. However, the skills of teaching assistants in observing children's learning are not fully developed. The improvements to the outdoor area are innovative and exciting. Planning is strong because adults devise learning themes firmly based on children's interests. The recent 'Pirates' topic stimulated and excited young children, and appropriate books inspired boys and girls alike. The introduction of a structured programme in teaching letters and sounds has a positive effect on improving early reading skills. Children's personal development and early literacy and numeracy skills are promoted well in EYFS. As a result, they make good gains in these areas particularly in their attitudes to learning. By the time they move on to Year 1, children's attainment is close to the level expected. Basic writing skills are still at an early stage of development.

Leadership in the EYFS is very good. The leader continually seeks ways to improve provision and has a secure understanding of the strengths and weaknesses. Data is analysed carefully and identifies ways to enhance learning, for example in the way that boys learn best. Good attention is given to staff development needs and a planned training programme is in place.

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

- Use the school assessment procedures more rigorously throughout Key Stage 2.
- Improve standards in writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good and standards are broadly average. Children enter the school with a range of abilities and skills that are well below those expected for their age. Children progress well in the EYFS. On leaving the Reception class, children attain levels just below those expected of their age.

Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress. In 2007, the school's results in national assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 dipped slightly. However, provisional results for 2008 show significant improvement in all subjects. This is due to the successful and consistent use of tracking and assessment procedures in this key stage

At the lower end of Key Stage 2 progress slows down, but picks up again in Years 5 and 6. National test results at the end of Key Stage 2 have been at least satisfactory in all subjects over the past four years. Provisional test results for 2008, supported by the school's own data, indicate a slight dip in writing and mathematics. This is due to two main factors. The variable teaching in lower Key Stage 2 is leading to gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding; and the lack of rigour in using tracking and assessment procedures is slowing down progress. School data for the current Year 6 indicate an improvement in attainment. Pupils with learning

difficulties and/ or disabilities make good progress. Pupils from minority ethnic groups achieve exceptionally well in both key stages.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and their moral, social and cultural development are good. Spiritual development is outstanding. Pupils show high levels of compassion and care. They support charities well. Those in Year 6 'adopt' a Reception-age child as a 'special friend', helping them draw pictures for their parents to see. Pupils have regular opportunities for prayer, worship and joyful singing. They thoroughly enjoy the good range of varied and interesting activities provided for them. Attendance has improved and is now good. The school ethos ensures pupils develop a clear understanding of right and wrong. They respect the rights of others to learn and collaborate well in lessons. Behaviour is good, bullying is rare and pupils say, 'We forgive and forget.' Pupils are sensitive to the needs of others and welcome those from other cultures helping them integrate and become part of the school community. The school council is involved well in school life and is proud that it successfully organises the school fair. They also obtained an area outside for quiet thinking. Pupils eat sensibly and take plenty of exercise to help them stay fit. Teamwork is encouraged and pupils confidently share ideas in lessons. Their basic skills and their very good personal qualities prepare them well for the future.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good but varies between classes. Relationships are especially good and as a result, most pupils behave well and work hard to please the teacher. Teachers have well organised classroom routines. Planning is detailed and questioning is used to good effect to extend children's thinking and assess their learning. Resources, including a range of practical activities and games are used effectively to engage pupils' attention and motivate them to learn. The method of creatively linking subjects together in some classes excites pupils, who explain, 'We like learning because we get lots of fun things to do.' Most teachers use what they know about pupils to provide work that is well matched to the different abilities. Where teaching is strong pupils very much appreciate the way teachers mark their work, offer them time for reflection, give good, clear advice and encourage them to become responsible for their own improvements. Where teaching is satisfactory, explanations are less clear and assessment is not used effectively so that activities are not always pitched at the right level.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good with outstanding features. There is a good emphasis on the core skills of literacy and numeracy to ensure standards are maintained. A recent financial investment in hardware and technical support has ensured that ICT is used well in classes and across all subjects. Recent and innovative changes to schemes of work effectively link learning across a range of subjects. Music and art are strong features because of the external input from expert artists and musicians. Pupils learn well in these subjects and captivating displays of their work adorn the classrooms and corridors. A wide range of extra enrichment opportunities has

broadened the experience of all pupils and many participate in the extensive extra-curricular activities offered, including dancing, crafts, ukulele and choir. The successful drama club recently produced the musical 'Bugsy Malone'. Pupil participation in the additional sporting activities provided by the school, including visits to an outdoor residential centre, adds an extra dimension to their physical education curriculum.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The quality of support, care and guidance is good. Pastoral care is outstanding. Staff know pupils well and there is good support for vulnerable children or those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school works very well with outside agencies to ensure that those pupils with additional needs receive extra professional help. Teachers' set challenging targets and in most classes pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve their work. The tracking of pupils' progress year on year is now more rigorous. It helps the school identify pupils who might be falling behind and gives them the extra support they need.

Pupils say they are well looked after and they are very well cared for. Arrangements for keeping pupils safe meet statutory requirements and there is very good attention to health and safety, risk assessments, fire safety and First Aid. Pupils say the security of the building makes them feel safe. Good supervision arrangements make them feel well looked after.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The strong leadership of the headteacher provides an exceptionally clear and well focused direction for the work of the school within which the academic, personal development and inclusion of all pupils are central to its vision. The enthusiastic senior leadership team now works closely together to ensure assessment procedures and data are fully analysed so that pupils' learning can be tracked and monitored throughout. As a result, the school sets realistic but challenging targets for its pupils in order to improve standards. As a team, the senior leaders place strong emphasis on improving provision and teachers are now more accountable for the progress their pupils make. The improvements in attainment in Key Stage 1 are a direct result of new initiatives being consistently applied. The leadership team is now extending its monitoring procedures into Key Stage 2 in order to improve standards. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses well and the improvement plan provides a good basis for moving the school forward. The priorities link closely to the development points raised through whole school self-evaluation. Issues from the last inspection have been fully addressed and the school has good capacity for further improvement.

Governance is good and has improved since the last inspection report. Governors are experienced, knowledgeable and well informed. They are very committed to the school and make a good contribution to the school's place in the local and parish community. They show a good awareness of the standards pupils attain. They challenge the school, monitor its work and assist in planning.



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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 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 <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/or disabilities make progress	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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

<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	1
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	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

## Annex B

### Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

6 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Augustine's Catholic Primary School and Nursery, Gateshead, NE10 8PP

I had a very enjoyable time in your school. You are very welcoming and friendly. It is good to see you growing up into confident young people. I particularly liked the conversations I had with you in your classes and it is good to see older pupils caring for younger ones. In your school everyone is welcome and no one is left out.

I know most of you work very hard and it is good to see some of you getting good test results. However in mathematics and in writing the school results show that some pupils are not doing as well as they could. Your new headteacher, together with all the teachers, is very determined to change this situation. You therefore have a very important part to play. You must work even harder, so your parents and teachers can be really proud of you.

I was pleased to see how well most of you behaved in lessons and around the school. I can tell you feel safe and secure when you are in school. The school knows you very well and tries to match your work to your individual ability. I have asked the staff to make sure that the results of your assessments are used in the same way right across Key Stage 2 classes. This will ensure that everyone is striding ahead and no one is getting work that is too hard or too easy.

I know your teachers work very hard to provide interesting work for you. Your art work is beautiful and you are doing very well in music. It is exciting to see how interested you all are when learning the history and stories behind Turner's painting, 'The Fighting Temeraire'.

Thank you again for being so helpful and don't forget: the harder you work, the more choices you will have about your future life opportunities.

With very best wishes

Gianna Ulyatt

Lead inspector