

# St Bernadettes Roman Catholic Primary School Aided

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108624
<b>Local Authority</b>	North Tyneside
<b>Inspection number</b>	324807
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gordon Potter

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)	344
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>	Mrs Jackie Colclough
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Alan Egdell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 March 2006
<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>	Rising Sun Cottages Wallsend Tyne and Wear NE28 9JW
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 2007363

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 March 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	324807

**Fax number**

0191 2007364

<b>Age group</b>	3-11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This Roman Catholic primary school which is larger than average serves an area of average social advantage, although some less advantaged pupils attend the school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is average. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those whose first language is not English are well below average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average and the proportion with a statement of special educational need is well below average. Fewer pupils than is usual leave or join during the school year. Children enter the Nursery classes of the Early Years Foundation Stage in the autumn term. Amongst many awards, the school has the Artsmark Gold, Sportsmark Gold and International Schools awards. There is additional provision for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The headteacher leads both this school and a neighbouring school.

## 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 in which pupils achieve excellence in their academic and personal development. They reach above average academic standards in English, mathematics and science and perform extremely well in information and communication technology and many aspects of the arts, humanities and sport. They are extremely well cared for. The relentless drive to maintain high standards and to improve the learning experiences of pupils even further has resulted in an ever more vibrant curriculum so that pupils have an outstanding enjoyment of school. As one parent says, 'I can't think of a better place for children to be. The school has a wonderful atmosphere and the children are valued.'

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Teachers engage pupils in an exciting range of interesting independent and group work activities and they make it very clear to pupils what they are expected to learn. In the very few lessons which do not reach the highest standard, it is because pupils are not as involved as they might be because too much time is spent listening rather than doing. The curriculum is outstanding. It is based on pupils' interests and the development of skills which help pupils to achieve high standards. It is enhanced by an excellent range of activities and visits to promote learning and community cohesion. These activities excite pupils and encourage them to explore new areas of experience.

Standards at the end of Year 6 have been well above average in recent years and were above average in 2007. The unvalidated results for 2008 show that pupils did very well and were much higher than the national average. This represented outstanding progress considering their below average starting points to the school. Inspection evidence shows that pupils currently in Year 6 are well placed to achieve challenging targets in their tests at the end of this school year. Pupils in all classes continue to make extremely rapid progress. Their achievement is outstanding.

Outstanding care and support from a caring staff promote pupils' excellent personal development and well-being. Academic guidance is outstanding. Detailed analysis of data and meticulous marking of pupils' work ensure that the setting of targets is effective in enabling pupils to make outstanding progress. Behaviour and attitudes are outstanding and pupils show remarkable self-confidence and concern for one another and for others less fortunate than themselves. Pupils enjoy school immensely and this is reflected in their well above average attendance. They readily take on responsibilities, such as membership of the school council. Pupils have an outstanding understanding of how to keep healthy and stay fit, as the school strongly promotes these qualities. Pupils develop highly effective life skills as they move through the school because of the varied high quality experiences they receive.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The excellent headteacher has established a leadership team which shares his clear vision of school improvement. Well focused and appropriate initiatives have had an impact on further improving provision in school and in maintaining above average academic standards. There is exceptional teamwork and the headteacher encourages all teachers and the team of teaching assistants to develop their leadership roles. There is exemplary understanding of the school's many strengths and meticulous development planning to ensure that any relative weaknesses are addressed. This has ensured continued improvement for the school, even on its previous outstanding inspection. It therefore offers outstanding value for money and has an outstanding capacity to improve further.

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

### **Grade: 1**

The level at which children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage is below that expected for children of their age, particularly in aspects of communication, language and literacy, personal and social development and mathematics. However, children get an excellent start to their education. Excellent induction and welfare arrangements help children to settle and thrive in the warm and supportive environment. They develop a love of learning and are confident and excited to explore the world around them. Relationships are excellent and engender confidence and a love of learning. Teaching is outstanding with an excellent balance between activities where children discover things for themselves and those where they work with an adult. This is supported by an outstanding curriculum that stimulates and encourages children to want to learn. As a result, children make excellent progress in all areas of learning, irrespective of their starting points and leave the Reception class with knowledge, skills and understanding that are at least in line with expectations and often well beyond them. The free flow use of the indoor and of the exceptionally well planned and exciting outdoor accommodation is good, exemplifying the school's successful emphasis on the development of independence in selecting and carrying out activities. Children's behaviour is outstanding. Assessment procedures are rigorous, providing accurate information to support planning, extend children's learning and identify appropriate intervention strategies for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The outstanding leadership and excellent teamwork provide a vibrant and exciting learning environment in which children are valued.

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

- Ensure that the best practices for involving pupils in their learning are used consistently across school.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Standards are well above average and achievement is outstanding. From starting points which are below national expectations, children make rapid progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and also in Years 1 and 2. By the end of Key Stage 1 they achieve standards which are typically in line with the national average. The unvalidated test results in the 2008 tests for 11 year olds showed that the percentage gaining the standard expected for their age was significantly higher than the national average. The proportion of pupils who achieve the higher Level 5, is in line with the national average, but represents outstanding progress for these pupils. Data held by the school indicate that the current Year 6 pupils are well placed to exceed the very challenging targets set for them in English, mathematics and science. There is also substantial evidence of pupils' very good achievement in the humanities, arts and sport. Pupils are making excellent progress overall because of the outstanding teaching they receive. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make similar progress to their peers as a result of very effective intervention to meet their needs.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils speak of their school with loyalty and pride. Their exceptional enjoyment is reflected in high levels of attendance. Behaviour is exemplary in lessons and around the school. Pupils are

polite, helpful and supportive of one another so that they feel safe and well cared for. Pupils show exceptional levels of spirituality, excellent cultural awareness and are encouraged to think deeply about social and moral issues. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. A range of external accreditation and awards shows the high quality of personal development in sport and health. Pupils make a significant contribution to the school community through the long established and very influential elected school council. Pupils are also strongly involved in the wider community with contributions to Holocaust Memorial Day and sponsoring a pupil from the adjacent special school to visit Lourdes. Their enterprise skills are well developed through this work. These and the many other skills they acquire, allied to the high standards they achieve, mean that pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next phase of their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding and contributes markedly to the outstanding progress pupils make. A caring and dedicated teaching team, supported by good quality teaching assistants, works tirelessly to support pupils. As a result, relationships are excellent. Lessons are planned with care to meet the needs of all, including the gifted and talented and those with learning disabilities and/or difficulties. Pupils have a good understanding of whether or not they have learnt well enough in lessons. This self-knowledge helps pupils to understand their targets for improvement. A wide variety of approaches is used to inspire pupils. Whether it is exploring the value of numbers through role-play in mathematics, or dressing up as Elizabethans in history, or exploring the properties of friction outdoors in science, pupils thrive on opportunities to learn practically. Interactive whiteboard technology features very positively in many lessons by involving pupils in their learning and capturing their imagination; for example, video snippets inspired Year 6 pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the devices used in persuasive writing. Where lessons do not reach the highest standard, it is because pupils are not as involved as they might be because they spend too much time listening rather than doing.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

A first-rate curriculum provides something for everyone and successfully brings out pupils' strengths. The standard curriculum is suitably planned to ensure outstanding achievement in the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. In addition, a wealth of additional activities within the curriculum enables pupils to develop their interests; for example, in science, local history, sport or the arts and notably the programme of dance which enthuses all pupils. The gifted and talented pupils benefit from very good strategies to extend their good prior knowledge and excellent provision is made for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with challenging behaviour. Superb international links, driven by the headteacher, make a significant difference to the pupils' understanding of their own lives and those of others in different cultures and have a significant impact on community cohesion. French is taught across the school and is enhanced by close links with a school in Rwanda. The provision for pupils' personal, social and emotional development is carefully planned and contributes greatly to pupils' excellent rates of development. This is enhanced by the lessons which are shared with pupils from the neighbouring special school.

Extra-curricular activities supplement lessons very well and enable pupils to taste a range of different experiences, for example in cheerleading, skateboarding or playing chess. Educational trips to places such as Segedunum and residential visits enrich and broaden learning significantly.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils benefit from the excellent quality of care and guidance by all staff. Their safety is given the highest priority and all procedures related to maintaining pupils' safeguarding and child protection meet current requirements. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive excellent support. Provision is well planned, progress is carefully monitored and staff are wisely deployed, resulting in pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities doing very well. Those in the resourced unit for behavioural difficulties benefit from excellent teaching and make great strides during their time in school. Excellent strategies for supporting gifted and talented pupils contribute to more able pupils achieving very well in many areas of their education; not only in literacy and numeracy, but also in the arts, sport and humanities. Assessment of academic progress is rigorous and used to set targets for pupils' progress and to intervene to deal with underachievement. Pupils develop a good understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses and are set termly targets for improvement.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

Leadership and management are outstanding. The very experienced and respected headteacher inspires all around him to achieve the high expectations he has for the school. He ensures that there is no complacency in this highly successful school so that its overall effectiveness remains outstanding. Because of his leadership role in a neighbouring school, the assistant headteachers and the higher level teaching assistant have increasing influence in the development of the school. Their roles are clearly delineated and they work extremely well as a team to ensure that there is constant striving for improvement. The school's implementation of such delegated and distributive management means that all staff are accountable and they thrive on the responsibility. Meticulous processes for monitoring and review mean that the school knows itself remarkably well and plans accordingly. The setting of very challenging targets has ensured that above average standards have been maintained. There is very impressive commitment to community cohesion which has impacted on the outstanding curriculum and pupils' outstanding spiritual and cultural development. The governing body offers outstanding support and challenge to the school, so that the high aspirations of the pupils and parents are met. Accordingly, the overwhelming majority of parents are hugely supportive of the work of the school and the way it cares for the social, personal and academic needs of their children.

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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 <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
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

<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>	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	1
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	1

## The quality of provision

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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Bernadette's Roman Catholic Primary School Aided, North Tyneside, NE28 9JW

On behalf of the team, thank you so much for making us welcome when we inspected your school. St Bernadette's Roman Catholic Primary School is an outstanding school which keeps getting better. The staff care for you extremely well. They help you to enjoy your learning because they make your lessons fun and arrange many exciting activities for you to do. They encourage you to know what you need to learn in each lesson.

We were pleased to see that you work hard and do your best. You come to school on time and care for one another in the playground. We think that you behave extremely well and you look after one another and others less fortunate than yourselves. You are very polite and helpful and we enjoyed talking to you about your school. You told us that you look forward to coming to school because you enjoy your lessons and that you like your teachers. You said you appreciated the activities the school provides for you, for example, the educational visits and the creative activities, such as dance. Your parents and carers like the school very much, especially the way in which your teachers care for you and help you to enjoy your learning.

We have asked your teachers to do one thing to make your school even better.

- Ensure that you have the best possible chance to be involved in your own learning in all classes across school.

You can help by continuing to do your very best, as I am sure you will.

Thank you for all your help and I wish you every success in all you do in the future.

All the best

Gordon Potter

Lead inspector