

# St Bede's Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116380
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	326376
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 January 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Elisabeth Linley HMI

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	270
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>	Mr Paul Tatum
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Anthony Murray
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 November 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>	Popley Way Basingstoke Hampshire RG24 9DX
<b>Telephone number</b>	01256 473379
<b>Fax number</b>	01256 463860

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 January 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Many families of the Catholic faith who live beyond the immediate parish of St Bede's elect to bring their children to the school. Most pupils start school in Reception, the first class in the school's Early Years Foundation Stage. Over recent years, the number of pupils on roll has increased. Approximately 60 percent of pupils on roll are from a White British background. The remainder are from a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds; of these, about a sixth of pupils are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs is below average, while the proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. These mostly relate to moderate learning, behavioural and emotional, and physical and medical difficulties.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The vast majority of parents are clear that St Bede's is a good school, and inspectors agree. The care and support provided for pupils are of good quality. It is this level of care, underpinning the school's ethos, which encourages pupils' good behaviour and their positive attitudes to learning. As one parent said, 'School upholds Christian values, and the children realise the importance of these values in life.' It is no surprise, therefore, that pupils' spiritual development is outstanding.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They are encouraged to take a responsible and caring attitude towards each other and their school. Pupils learn and play together well and take their responsibilities seriously. Pupils' attendance is broadly average; this is because some families take their children out of school for long holidays. Nonetheless, pupils enjoy school, particularly the outstanding enrichment of the curriculum that provides exciting opportunities for learning.

Enjoyment of school begins in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where good-quality provision enables children to achieve well. In particular, children with learning difficulties, or who learn English as an additional language, benefit from good support. This well-focused teaching is maintained throughout school, and so pupils with these specific needs achieve well. As a result of good teaching overall, pupils make good progress. By the time they leave school at the end of Year 6, most attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science, and an above average proportion of pupils do well at the higher level in English, mathematics and science. However, this good achievement of more-able pupils is not consistent in all classes. This is because some teachers do not always plan activities that will challenge them to achieve their best.

Pupils are benefiting from an improved curriculum that makes effective links between subjects. Pupils say this approach makes learning more enjoyable. They also say that they are helped to improve their work through effective discussion with staff. However, not all pupils are clear about their targets for improvement, and marking does not always help them understand how their work can be further improved.

The school is led and managed well. A tight focus on the monitoring and evaluation of pupils' progress has engaged teachers effectively in the school's work to raise standards. Part of this work has been to forge good links with parents and others. For example, partnerships with outside agencies, such as ones relating to speech therapy and mental health, and the local authority's specialist service (EMTAS), are used well. This work is led and managed effectively by the inclusion manager. Strong links with the church and local community are a feature of the school's success. However, opportunities provided for pupils to understand other communities in the United Kingdom and communities abroad are not yet developed to the same high standard.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children join the Reception class with knowledge and skills that are broadly in line with those expected of children of a similar age. However, there are growing numbers of children in the Reception classes, representing a sizeable minority, who speak English as an additional language, and children who have learning difficulties. Many of these children have not reached the

expected levels of communication skills or emotional development when they start school. All children are responding well to the good-quality provision of the Early Years Foundation Stage, which contributes effectively to their good achievement. Children benefit from a new range of well-organised and exciting activities that includes provision for outdoor learning. Opportunities for choice and for taking turns and sharing promote children's confidence and make a positive contribution to their independent learning. Good leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage have resulted in improved methods for teaching letters and sounds. Teaching is good, and teachers plan well for the children's different needs. However, in some lessons, when children sit on the carpet while the teacher is talking, they lose concentration because the teaching fails to capture their interest. The care and attention given to children's welfare are good, a factor which is appreciated by parents. As a result, children settle happily, and Early Years Foundation Stage activities and procedures promote their personal development well.

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

- Ensure that the needs of pupils are met effectively in all classes, and that greater challenge is consistently provided for those who are more able.
- Ensure that the marking of pupils' work shows how it can be improved, and that pupils better understand their targets for improvement.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop a broader understanding of communities within the United Kingdom and in the rest of the world.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

When children leave the Early Years Foundation Stage, most have acquired the knowledge and skills that enable them to attain above expectations for their age. In recent years, pupils have not built well enough on this good achievement. However, this is beginning to change. In the 2008 Year 2 national tests in reading, writing and mathematics, results improved and were in line with the national average. An appreciable minority of these Year 2 pupils have learning difficulties and achieved well in relation to their starting points. However, more-able pupils did not achieve as well as they should have done. Results from the Year 6 national tests in English, mathematics and science show improvement on 2007. Standards were above average in all subjects, and pupils did particularly well at Level 5. Intervention strategies to support pupils who speak English as an additional language or have learning difficulties have made a difference, and pupils with these specific needs achieve well throughout school. School data show that most pupils in school are now making good progress. However, the good achievement of more-able pupils is not yet assured in all classes because some teachers do not consistently challenge them to do their best.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are very attentive in lessons and are well focused on their work. Many are confident and articulate, and participate well in activities, in part because they enjoy incentives such as 'Mission Leaves' and 'Work of the Week' certificates. In the playground and around the school, most pupils behave well and are friendly and considerate towards others. Their enjoyment of school is clear. Pupils show a good understanding of healthy eating and drinking, and understand the value of fitness and exercise. They say there is little bullying, and that they are happy to confide

in teachers if ever they feel concerned about their safety. Pupils' spiritual development is outstanding, and their moral, social and cultural development is good. Through assemblies and the curriculum - for example, religious education, the arts and music - pupils develop a good understanding, tolerance and respect of others and of their cultural differences. They appreciate opportunities to make positive contributions to the school, their church and the local community, through taking on roles of responsibility such as school councillors, and through fund-raising. They are well prepared for their future economic well-being because of their good achievement in literacy and numeracy, and their good social skills.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Good relationships between staff and pupils underpin the positive ethos for learning. As a result, pupils develop in self-confidence and are successfully motivated to do their best.. Pupils have responded well to strategies introduced to make teaching and learning more enjoyable. Strengths in teaching include well-focused questioning, a good pace to lessons, and the good use of different strategies to maintain pupils' interest, for example with mini-plenaries and purposeful use of 'talk time'. This work is contributing well to the good progress that pupils make. Where teaching is not as effective, pupils are kept on the carpet for too long at the beginning of lessons, or time is not used well enough. In most lessons, planning reflects the needs of learners well. However, in some classes, teachers do not always plan suitable activities for more-able pupils so that they consistently achieve their best.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum has been revised to provide improved links between subjects, and better opportunities for pupils to use their skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology in other subjects. As a result, most pupils are enthusiastic and eager to learn. Work is planned effectively to capture the interests of pupils through broad topics such as 'flash bang', which is work on light and sound. Although some teachers are not yet planning well enough to meet the needs of more-able pupils, assessment information is used effectively to modify the curriculum for pupils with English as an additional language, and for those who have learning difficulties. Curriculum enrichment is outstanding. An exceptionally high proportion of pupils attend at least one of the many lunchtime clubs organised by staff and visitors for sports, arts, prayer or general activities. Further enrichment is provided by the inclusion of specialist teaching in drama, French and sports and in instrumental music tuition. Interesting visits to locations such as Southsea Castle are a regular feature of the school, and very strong links with the church enhance the curriculum further.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school welcomes pupils from a wide range of differing backgrounds. Care for their personal welfare is effective, and systems to ensure their safeguarding are fully in place and rigorously applied. Staff work successfully with a range of agencies to meet pupils' learning, emotional, physical and medical needs, and these good links support pupils' learning and well-being effectively. Academic support and guidance have been a focus for the school's work. This is

now much improved, and information gathered is used well to assess where intervention is required. As a result, carefully planned support is provided for groups of pupils such as those who speak English as an additional language and those who have learning difficulties, and this contributes to their good achievement. Pupils are helped to understand how they can improve their work through effective discussion with staff. However, marking of their work does not consistently show what their next steps might be, and pupils are not always clear about their own targets for improvement.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher, ably supported by the assistant headteachers and senior staff, provides a strong direction for the school. He sets challenging targets to ensure improvement; as a result, good progress has been made since the last inspection. The senior leadership team accurately evaluates the school's strengths and weaknesses, and effective plans have been put in place to ensure that weaknesses are tackled. A key example of this improvement is the rigorous implementation of the tracking and evaluation of pupils' progress. Teachers are held to account for the progress that pupils make, and 'progress meetings' between teachers and senior leaders are important in raising standards. Leaders and managers are equally committed to promoting pupils' understanding of faith, ethnicity and culture as reflected within the school community. Through the school's values and 'mission', pupils' tolerance, understanding and respect of others are nurtured. To this end, strong links are forged with others, particularly with the church and local community. Links overseas are being established, for example with a school in Sierra Leone. This work, coupled with another county initiative in which the school is involved, is in the early stages of development. Governors have a clear overview of the work of the school. They know the school well and provide good levels of challenge and support as critical friends. Finances are managed effectively, and the school provides good value for money. The school has a good capacity to improve further.

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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	2
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	3
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	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?	3
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**

11 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Bede's Catholic Primary School, Hampshire, RG24 9DX

Thank you for being so helpful and friendly when we visited your school. We really enjoyed seeing the lessons we visited, and talking with you and the adults who work with you. This letter is to tell you what we found out about St Bede's, which is a good school.

It is good to see that you really enjoy school. You have lots of super 'extra' activities to do that make your lunchtimes in particular very interesting. Your faith is very important to you all and this was clearly shown during your school assembly led by pupils in Hedgehogs class. Well done to everyone for taking part! You are very caring towards each other, and most of you behave well and take your responsibilities seriously. It is clear that you also try hard to do your best. Most of you make good progress, especially those of you who find learning hard or who are learning English as your second language. This is because you are well taught and supported by the adults. The people in charge of school do a good job and have improved things. They have worked hard with you to improve standards in English, mathematics and science, so the older pupils are now attaining high standards in these subjects. There are three things that we have asked your headteacher and teachers to do to make things even better, and you can help too.

We would like:

- your teachers to make sure that your work is just right for you, particularly for those of you who sometimes find lessons too easy
- the marking of your work to show how you can make it even better, and for you to understand what your targets for improvement are
- your teachers to give you more opportunities to develop a greater understanding of other communities in Britain and the world.

Many thanks again for making us so welcome.

Yours faithfully

Elisabeth Linley

Her Majesty's Inspector