

# St Bede's Catholic Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100631
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lambeth
<b>Inspection number</b>	335569
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 January 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Milton

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	205
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Father Christopher Basden
<b>Headteacher</b>	Catherine Davis and Ewa Ostrynska
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 November 2006
<b>School address</b>	Thornton Road Clapham Park London SW12 0LF
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and analysed pupils' work, school policies and improvement plan, as well as 45 parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the impact of the strategies to improve boys' writing
- the link between teaching and pupils' learning
- the impact of the school's strategy to improve attendance.

## Information about the school

This average-sized school has pupils from a wide variety of minority ethnic backgrounds. The largest groups are from Black African and White European backgrounds. A majority of pupils speak English as an additional language. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a Nursery and two Reception classes. The school admits children shortly after their third birthday and most spend five terms in the Nursery. An above-average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. An average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These needs include behavioural and emotional difficulties, speech and language difficulties and complex communication difficulties. In recognition of its work, the school has received Healthy School status. A long-serving headteacher retired last summer. Two senior members of staff are acting co-headteachers, and are sharing the headteacher's duties for the current school year. A new Nursery is being built on the school's site.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

### Main findings

St Bede's is a good, happy school. When children join the school, their levels of development are below those expected for their ages, especially in their communication, language and literacy and their personal and social development. Children make good progress during the Early Years Foundation Stage. During Key Stage 1, pupils continue to make good progress, especially during Year 2, where teaching is best. The different groups of pupils, such as those with English as an additional language and those eligible for free school meals, all make good progress and are fully involved in the school's life. Consequently, equality of opportunity is excellent. By the end of Year 2, standards of attainment match national averages for reading, writing and mathematics.

Because of recent, unavoidable staff changes, teaching is satisfactory during Key Stage 1. The effective leadership is improving the quality of teaching. Lessons are regularly and accurately monitored. Monitoring records show the strengths of teaching and areas for improvement, but they do not express these as specific targets for improvement or evaluate improvement since the previous observation. Senior staff support lesson planning and model effective teaching for staff. However, the quality of teaching is not yet consistently good. In a large majority of lessons, accurate assessment is used to ensure that work challenges pupils of all abilities, and pupils are given interesting activities. They have really good opportunities to discuss ideas and answers in small groups before sharing these with the whole class. Classes are well managed so that no time is wasted, and teachers, teaching assistants and pupils work very well together. However, in a small minority of lessons, assessment information is not used effectively to match work to pupils' differing learning needs and activities do not ensure that all pupils are actively involved in learning.

Despite the weaknesses in some teaching, pupils make good progress because of their excellent behaviour and great enthusiasm to learn, and the strong sense of common purpose and high expectations amongst the school community. In addition, the curriculum is being improved and so, as one boy said, 'We're given fun things to learn.' There is an outstanding system to carefully assess the progress of each pupil along with progress of different groups, such as boys and girls, and those who have less time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where there is underachievement, action is taken to ensure that pupils' learning needs are met both within classes and by the use of extra teaching groups. In addition, there is some excellent marking and target setting so that pupils know what they are doing well and how to improve. Pupils feel very safe and report that incidents of bullying are extremely rare. The excellent care, guidance and support ensure the well-being of all pupils so they can make the most of the opportunities provided by the school.

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Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Spiritual development is especially strong and is based on the school's commitment to 'Gospel values'. Reflecting the school's Healthy School status, pupils have an excellent understanding of the importance of a healthy diet and exercise.

The good governance has improved since the last inspection. Leaders have an accurate knowledge of the school's successes and areas for improvement. They use this knowledge to plan a wide range of developments that are improving the school. However, the school improvement plan is not always precise about the actions to be taken and how the impact of these actions on pupils' progress will be measured. The school has a good capacity for sustained improvement as it is taking effective action to improve teaching and has sustained pupils' good rates of progress since the last inspection. The school gives excellent value for money because it uses its resources effectively so that pupils achieve well and have outstanding personal development and well-being.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Secure consistently good teaching and the use of assessment information by improving the records made for the monitoring of lessons so that they:
  - set specific targets for improvements to assessment and teaching
  - record the improvements made to assessment and teaching since the previous monitoring observation.
- Sharpen the school improvement plan by:
  - making sure that planned actions are linked to improvements in pupils' learning
  - being clear about the measurable improvements to pupils' progress that are expected as a result of these actions
  - consulting parents, governors and teachers so that the new plan is ready for next September.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****1**

Work on the Great Fire of London caught pupils' imaginations in Year 2. In a lesson, pupils enjoyed the brisk pace of teaching that provided a sequence of engaging activities that prepared them exceptionally well to write a diary entry as the baker who started the fire. There was enormous enjoyment and excitement as groups of Year 2 pupils applied their information and communication technology skills to use programmable toys to draw patterns. In a small minority of lessons, the activities did not motivate and engage some pupils sufficiently.

All groups of pupils make at least good progress because teaching and the curriculum are adapted to meet their learning needs, and action is taken to address any underachievement, as shown by the tracking of the progress of individuals and groups of pupils. Assessment information showed that boys made less progress than girls with

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writing. As a result, a good range of improvements have been made, including the use of stimulating resources, such as film clips, and paired discussions and role play to prepare pupils for writing. These have encouraged boys to enjoy writing much more. Teachers' high expectations are reflected in pupils' carefully presented work. Some pupils with more complex special educational needs and/or disabilities make particularly rapid progress because of the very effective support from teaching assistants in lessons and the special teaching programmes.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary around the school and in the playground. They have an excellent understanding of dangers in a variety of contexts and know how to stay safe. Their attendance rate has improved and is average. They know the school's values and are considerate and caring towards each other. Pupils have a good knowledge of different faiths. They respect difference and celebrate diversity, and pupils from different backgrounds work and play happily together. There are good resources for outdoor play and a high participation rate in school clubs by pupils from all groups within the school. Pupils make a good contribution to the school's strong community and have effective links with the local community, including the parish church. They give strong support to British and international charities. Pupils' preparation for the future is enhanced by visits to the school of local people, who answer pupils' questions about their jobs.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>
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### How effective is the provision?

Although teaching is not consistently good, its quality is improving because of the effective monitoring of lessons and pupils' work, and senior leaders' involvement in the shared planning of lessons and the checking of pupils' standards. Teaching is supported by some excellent systems to assess pupils' progress but this information is not used consistently in all classes to plan pupils' next steps of learning. However, there is much excellent marking and pupils respond to teachers' advice and challenges. Pupils assess their own work using the lesson's learning objective and, in a Year 1 lesson, thoughtfully and considerately assessed the work of some of their classmates.

The curriculum is being improved by creating imaginative links between subjects and identifying themes that motivate and interest the pupils. This is helping to improve teaching by giving pupils more enjoyable learning activities. An example from the Year 1 theme of 'Pirates' was that pupils enjoyed using their design and technology skills to make artefacts to use during a role play to develop their literacy skills. The excellent care, guidance and support helps pupils and their families to make the most of the opportunities provided by the school's teaching and curriculum.

Effective and comprehensive strategies encourage higher levels of attendance. There are consistent and thorough systems for managing pupils' behaviour and for supporting those with emotional and behavioural difficulties. There is excellent support for vulnerable pupils so that they are happy and achieve well. There is effective work with a range of agencies to provide specialist and coordinated provision for vulnerable pupils. There is a high level of support for families, including those where parents and carers speak little English. A good number of staff speak a second language and communicate with parents and children in their home language as necessary.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

### How effective are leadership and management?

There are challenging targets for the progress of pupils each year, reflecting senior leaders' high expectations for the pupils. These high expectations are shared by other staff. An excellent system is used to monitor the progress of different groups of pupils and to identify any underachievement. When underachievement is identified, actions are

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taken to improve the learning of that group. Consequently, equality of opportunity is at the heart of the school's work. There have been unavoidable staffing changes and the acting headteachers have a strong programme of support to sustain and improve the school's good provision.

Training, coaching, monitoring and performance management are being used well to improve the effectiveness of staff. The regular monitoring of pupils' work has been particularly effective in improving pupils' progress. Good management has minimised any disadvantage to pupils of the current building work on the school's site. Pupils have a strong sense of belonging to a cohesive community that values diversity and promotes shared values. The school makes a strong impact on the local community in a variety of ways, including the effective support for parents and carers with little English and the promotion of high expectations for all pupils. The school has not yet developed its links with wider communities. There are good policies and procedures for making sure that pupils are safe.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress during the Nursery and Reception classes and, by the time they join Year 1, a majority have reached average standards in the required areas of learning. They make particularly rapid progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Children's progress is good because they have access to a rich variety of learning activities indoors and outside, and adults use community languages to help those at an early stage of speaking English. Children with special educational needs



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and/or disabilities are quickly identified and supported. Adults usually extend children's learning well, and there is a good balance between child-initiated and adult-directed activities. Occasionally, activities are not sufficiently well organised or exciting, and learning opportunities are not fully exploited by adults.

A good range of actions have improved boys' progress by, for example, using children's ideas to plan the curriculum and increasing outdoor activities that include reading and writing. For instance, during the inspection a snow rescue role play area was established. Assessment information is used well to guide the curriculum planning for individuals and groups of pupils. Each child has an excellent record of achievement that includes termly contributions from parents and carers. There are excellent levels of care for children, including the youngest who have just joined the nursery.

The school has been unable to recruit staff with established expertise in the Early Years Foundation Stage and is taking effective steps to develop the expertise of existing staff. The leaders know the strengths and weaknesses in provision. The good steps taken to address the weaknesses are resulting in a higher quality of provision.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

**Views of parents and carers**

The parents and carers are very pleased indeed with all aspects of the care and education the school provides for their children. Almost all parents expressed positive views about the school. A few parents wrote about particular concerns or aspects about which they were particularly pleased. However, there was no common agreement to these views.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Bede's Catholic Infant School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 45 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 205 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	33	73	12	27	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	33	73	11	24	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	30	67	12	27	2	4	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	64	13	29	0	0	2	4
The teaching is good at this school	26	58	19	42	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	56	17	38	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	62	17	38	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	22	49	20	44	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	44	21	47	2	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	49	21	47	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	47	22	49	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	26	58	17	38	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	32	71	12	27	1	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



13 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Bede's Catholic Infant School, Clapham Park SW12 0LF

We really enjoyed visiting your school and seeing you having such fun playing in the snow. Thank you for making us so welcome. We learnt much about your school by talking to many of you and the staff.

Your school is excellent at helping you develop as people. All adults take exceptionally good care of you, especially if you need some extra support. We were impressed by your politeness and self-confidence. It was good to hear from you that you feel very safe at school and know how to stay safe when crossing the road. You enjoy the interesting activities and visits. Your behaviour is excellent. The school helps you to live healthy lifestyles. We were impressed by the way that you care for each other.

You make good progress with your learning because your lessons give you interesting and well-planned activities so that you can meet the WILFs (What I'm Looking For) you are set. As a result, you reach average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. In most lessons, teaching is good and helps you learn a great deal. In a small number of lessons, teaching and use of the findings from marking are not as good as they could be. Sometimes this is because the activities do not interest you or build on what you already know and can do. We have asked the headteachers and staff to work on this issue so that all teaching is good in every lesson. The marking of your work in literacy and numeracy is excellent. We were impressed by the way that you mark your own work and act on your teachers' comments and challenges. You are really good at checking your work in literacy against your literacy targets.

The two headteachers and staff work very hard to improve the care and education you receive. Many improvements are being made, for example, to the topics you study such as The Great Fire of London. As a result, you are making more progress with your learning. We have asked the school to make changes to its improvement plan so that the improvements focus more clearly on helping you to learn more.

You can all help your school to improve by making sure you come to school regularly. Carry on with your excellent behaviour and good work!

Yours sincerely

Mike Milton

Lead Inspector

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