

St Chad's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103435
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	336082
Inspection dates	10–11 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Martyn Groucutt

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	186
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Canon Patrick Browne
Headteacher	Deborah Cachia
Date of previous school inspection	23 January 2007
School address	Hospital Street Newtown Birmingham
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. A total of nine lessons taught by seven teachers were seen. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' written work, curriculum planning and minutes of governing body meetings. Published policies and procedures were scrutinised, including those for the safeguarding of pupils. Meetings and discussions were held with school leaders, the school improvement partner and pupils, together with a telephone interview with the chair of governors who was abroad during the inspection. A total of 86 parental questionnaires were analysed, together with 11 from staff and 92 from pupils.

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

- the effectiveness of the school in meeting the needs of the growing numbers of pupils who enter the school speaking little or no English
- the impact of initiatives to promote community cohesion
- how the school maximises the academic potential of all pupils, whatever their academic ability
- the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage in preparing pupils for formal education while supporting language, social and emotional needs.

Information about the school

St Chad's is a small Primary school. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language are well above the national average. Increasing numbers of pupils are from families who are refugees or asylum seekers. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly in line with other schools. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above the national average.

The headteacher has been in post, first as acting headteacher and then as the substantive post holder, since February 2010.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school that has recently gone through its first change of headteacher for over 20 years. The new headteacher has a clear vision for taking the school forward and is being given good support by the governing body to achieve this. Wider leadership is not well-developed and subject coordinators have had limited time and opportunity to develop their roles. The performance management and professional development of staff have not always been focussed on raising standards and achievement in the past, but this is changing now. The school faces challenges in meeting the needs of a changing population, perhaps most noticeably in the rise in numbers of asylum seekers and refugees. Stemming in part from its very strong Catholic ethos the school has ensured that all pupils are given equal opportunities to achieve success. Its pupils are therefore a happy and confident group who enjoy attending school. They care for each other well and show a good understanding of their Catholic faith, although their knowledge of other faiths and communities is rather limited.

Since the last inspection children in the Reception class continue to do well and make good progress. The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is limited because the outside area does not allow free flow between indoors and outdoors, and entry is not secure. Attainment in the rest of the school has shown slight overall decline. Progress in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory, but is sometimes restricted by insufficient challenge or pace in teaching. However, in Key Stage 2 there has been an improvement this year that has restored attainment to above the national average. Teaching is stronger in this Key Stage, where the teachers have greater experience and as a result achievement is better among the older pupils.

Teaching overall is satisfactory and teachers collect assessment information during the year to inform them about the progress of their pupils. Where teaching is less effective, particularly in Key Stage 1, it is usually because the level of challenge is insufficient, or the pupils do not fully understand what is required of them. There is also a lack of consistency in marking across the school. The best teaching demonstrates good pace and challenge so that pupils are stimulated to achieve their best. Marking does not always provide sufficient guidance on what pupils have to do in order to improve the quality of their work or show 'next steps' towards achieving targets. The curriculum has a clear focus on developing skills of literacy and numeracy, which provides good support for pupils, especially those for whom English is an additional language. Opportunities for cross-curricular or topic work are currently under-developed. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those from vulnerable circumstances, are given good support and this enables them to make progress in line with other pupils. Overall, pupils understand key issues concerning safety and they are encouraged to lead

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healthy lifestyles. They are able to contribute to the life of the school in a variety of ways, but links with the local community are not well developed. Outcomes for individuals and groups of students are satisfactory overall. The increased focus on identifying areas of weakness and strengthening management systems, together with improving self evaluation and monitoring of teaching, means that there is satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure members of the leadership team have clear roles, responsibilities and job descriptions.
- Improve the progress of pupils, particularly in Key Stage 1, by ensuring:
 - challenge is high enough to enable them all to make the best possible progress
 - they understand tasks that are set and exactly what they are expected to learn
 - marking makes clear the next steps to making work even better, especially in mathematics.
- Develop links between curriculum areas and extend topic approaches to learning.
- Carry out an audit for community cohesion and use the information to plan opportunities to improve pupils' knowledge and understanding of other faiths and cultures.
- Increase the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage by providing a secure outside learning area with immediate access from the classroom.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils enter the Reception class with skills and experiences below, and often well below, those expected for their age. As a result of effective teaching they make good progress which enables them to enter Year 1 with standards that are broadly average. By the end of Year 2 they remain broadly average. Attainment in Key Stage 1 has been falling over the last three years and the school's own data suggests that this pattern has not been reversed during this school year. By the end of Year 6 attainment has been stronger in English, where it is has been above average, than in mathematics and science. The school's data shows that in the current Year 6 the overall slight decline in attainment of recent years has been reversed and is now above the national average in all the core subjects. This is reflected in the progress and the pupils' learning observed in lessons, which is better in the upper years. There are no significant differences in the progress made by different groups of pupils, a significant achievement in a school where so many pupils speak English as an additional language and arrive with little or no English. Achievement is satisfactory and where the teaching is more effective pupils do well in a range of subjects. This enables them to acquire knowledge and understanding, and to

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make the sort of progress that would be expected given their starting points. Good support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those from vulnerable circumstances, particularly by the learning mentor, enables them to make progress at the same rate as others. When pupils are given opportunities to work in groups and undertake individual research, such as was seen in a Year 5 mathematics lesson on probability, they can make good progress. At the moment such opportunities, especially in Key Stage 2, are rather limited.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school and they get on together very well. They enjoy school and attendance is average. Behaviour is good, although when teaching fails to stimulate pupils, there is some minor disruption. Healthy lifestyles are encouraged, for example through a range of sporting opportunities and through opportunities to grow fresh vegetables in the school allotment. This encouragement also extends to supporting the emotional health and well-being of the increasing numbers whose families are refugees or asylum seekers. Pupils' contribution to the school and wider community is good, although they lack opportunities to develop a wider understanding of other cultures. Opportunities to develop skills to support future economic well-being are satisfactory. While spiritual, moral, social and economic development is satisfactory overall, there is excellent spiritual development and understanding of the Catholic faith, well supported by the prayer room and prayer garden.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

¹ 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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The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
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How effective is the provision?

There are generally good relationships between pupils and teachers, so that pupils develop good attitudes to their work and behave well. Teachers show secure subject knowledge. Teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and usually good in Key Stage 2 where the teachers are more experienced in their roles. Pupils therefore demonstrate more effective learning and progress in these years. Effective deployment of teaching assistants ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are able to make progress in line with their peers. The consistent use of learning objectives in effective lessons means that pupils know what they are going to learn. Assessment is undertaken regularly and used to match tasks to different learning needs in lessons, so that pupils of all abilities can make at least satisfactory progress. However, across the school marking is inconsistent and does not always show pupils their next steps of development, particularly in mathematics. The level of challenge is not always high enough to ensure that all pupils are making consistently good progress and maximising their abilities.

The curriculum is strong in religious education, information and communication technology (ICT) and modern foreign languages. Learning is enriched through a number of clubs, by visitors who come into school and opportunities for trips. Gifted and talented pupils are given opportunities to achieve. While there are occasional opportunities to develop themes that support links between different subjects, such as the current football World Cup, these are not yet embedded across the whole curriculum. Teachers use ICT effectively to support learning in all curriculum areas throughout the school, but do not maximise its use in developing topic work.

Care, guidance and support are good. A particular strength is the support for pupils who might be vulnerable. Pupils who are looked after are well supported and safeguarding procedures are effective. The strong Catholic ethos of care and consideration for others encourages pupils to demonstrate good personal development, such as attitudes, self-esteem and confidence, which impacts positively on the quality of their academic learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

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The new headteacher is providing clear and effective leadership, identifying priorities for school improvement. She has developed a very good working relationship with the deputy. There is currently a lack of clarity in the roles and responsibilities of the wider senior leadership team for embedding ambition and driving improvement, which have not been well developed in the past. Subject coordinators have had limited time to carry out their roles, such as the monitoring of pupils' progress and support for teaching colleagues. Procedures for the performance management and professional development of teachers have not been well-developed. Governors, under the clear leadership of the chair, support the school and demonstrate a desire to support school development. The school's engagement with parents is satisfactory and the new headteacher is building strong links with all parents.

A variety of partnerships within the church and the local community supports the school, although the role of the school in developing community cohesion is not well developed. In part this was because the school had not carried out its duty to undertake an audit of its local community. Pupils, for example, have a very limited understanding of the other faiths that are represented. Within school there is good equality of opportunity. Pupils in vulnerable circumstances, including children who are looked after by the local authority and those who arrive with very limited English, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are given good support and therefore make good progress. Safeguarding arrangements are good and include good links with other agencies such as the local police which help reduce risks to pupils. Because outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils are satisfactory and resources are focussed on meeting the needs of pupils, the school offers satisfactory value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

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Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in all the areas of learning and develop good personal qualities. They play well together, enjoy their learning and grow in confidence. Their behaviour is very good and they keep themselves and others safe. Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good and those who are potentially gifted or talented are identified and supported. The teacher and teaching assistant work together effectively to support a range of exciting and stimulating activities for the children, which are both adult and child initiated. The classroom is a stimulating environment, but the fact that there is currently no direct access to a secure outside area limits the overall effectiveness of provision. Staff compensate by making the most of the classroom to create a variety of different areas, but it means that provision overall is only satisfactory. Since the teacher is a newly qualified teacher she is not able to take responsibility for managing the provision, a task taken on by the headteacher. As this is only one of her whole-school responsibilities it means that the overall leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Replies to the majority of questions indicate good support for the school, but there are three areas where a few parents expressed concerns - behaviour, listening to parents and school leadership. The inspectors found that behaviour is generally very good, except in a few lessons. The new headteacher is working hard to get to know parents and concerns should diminish. Concern over the effectiveness of leadership reflects the recent change in headteacher. Inspectors found that the new headteacher is providing effective leadership.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Chad's Catholic Primary 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 86 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 186 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	47	55	35	41	2	2	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	43	62	32	37	0	0	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	42	49	42	49	1	1	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	45	52	36	42	3	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	47	55	36	42	1	1	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	35	41	44	51	3	3	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	43	47	55	0	0	1	1
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)	34	40	37	43	4	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	40	47	37	43	4	5	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	35	41	38	44	7	8	4	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	27	31	42	49	7	8	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	31	36	36	42	5	6	7	8
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	47	55	30	35	5	6	1	2

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



14 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Chad's Catholic Primary School, Birmingham, B19 3XD

I would like to thank you for the very warm welcome that you gave me and the other inspectors when we visited your school. We were very impressed by the way in which you get on together so well and your enjoyment of school. Your behaviour is generally good, your Catholic faith is obviously very important and you show a good understanding, but you do not have such a good understanding of other faiths and communities.

We found that the children in the Reception class get off to a good start and make good progress. Standards in Years 1 to 6 have varied in recent years and have gone down slightly, but this year's Year 6 pupils have shown good achievement and better attainment. Generally we found that you make better progress in Key Stage 2, where you are more challenged to do your best. The school is helping you improve your literacy and numeracy, but you do not get so many opportunities to practise these in different subjects or to do project work.

In order to help you achieve your very best, we have asked the school to do a few things including:

- ensuring that teachers in the senior leadership team have clear roles
- ensuring that there is always high challenge to make sure you achieve your very best, especially in Key Stage 1
- looking for ways in which you can see the links between subjects and opportunities to do more project work
- helping the youngest by creating a new outside learning area immediately next to the Reception classroom.

You can play a full part in helping your school become even better by always doing your best and supporting your teachers.

Yours sincerely

Martyn Groucutt

Lead inspector

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