

English Martyrs' Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108842
Local Authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	337166
Inspection dates	24–25 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Barbara Hudson

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Darren Hubbard
Headteacher	Mrs Anne Mackay
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' work, school policies, local authority evaluations, school self-evaluation and improvement planning and parental and pupils' questionnaires.

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

- pupils' attainment and progress
- the quality of teaching and assessment and its impact on pupils' learning
- the impact of the school's leadership team, the federation with St John's Bosco Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School and the partnership with the local authority are having on improving pupils' achievements
- arrangements to safeguard pupils.

Information about the school

This is an average sized primary school. It has been in a federation with St John Bosco Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School since September 2008. All pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils identified as having special needs and/or disabilities is in line with the national average. The school has recently gained the Active Mark, Healthy Schools award and Eco Warriors bronze award.

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**3****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****2**

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. It is improving at a rapid pace because the inspirational and methodical executive headteacher has established very secure systems and structures to evaluate the school's work that ensure gains made in the recent past are sustained in the future. The recently appointed senior leaders and middle managers are already making a positive contribution to the improvements in the school. The school has been very well supported by the federated school and the local authority. This additional support has helped teachers, senior leaders, middle managers and governors improve their practice by adopting new and more effective ways of working. The school has a good capacity to improve further.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. It has improved significantly over this academic year because the training that teachers have received, which they are diligently putting into practice, is enabling all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to make good progress. When children start Nursery many can do less than is typically expected for their age. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage Unit and they move into Year 1 as confident, keen learners. Pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 are making good progress in lessons because teachers are providing them with interesting and challenging work to do. Pupils' attainment in the 2009 national tests and assessments was low even though the Year 6 pupils did better than in previous years. The school's evidence shows that many more pupils are on target to attain the nationally expected levels at the end of this academic year, bringing the overall attainment much nearer to average. Inspection evidence supports the school's evaluation that teaching has improved, most pupils are making good progress and attainment is now much closer to average.

Teaching is good. In most lessons there is a good balance between teacher talk and pupils' activity. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace and pupils have opportunities to work with a partner or as part of a small group. Pupils are keen to learn and their behaviour is good because of the excellent relationships they have with their teachers and teaching assistants. Teachers are good at making sure pupils understand new learning. Pupils, however, have too few opportunities to evaluate and assess their own work. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly but there is not a consistent, rigorous approach to helping pupils know what they need to do next to improve their work. The school's system to track the progress made by the pupils is good and is used very well by teachers, senior leaders and middle managers to ensure that all pupils make at least satisfactory progress. Teaching assistants and the pastoral care worker are effective. They ensure that pupils make progress in lessons and also provide effective social and emotional support for those whose circumstances have made them most vulnerable.

The satisfactory curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to learn interesting things and engage in a wide range of after school clubs. It does not provide pupils with opportunities to suggest to teachers what they would like to learn in a given area or to appreciate the diversity in British society. Pupils are well cared for, guided and supported. The school has very good partnerships with a range of agencies and this means that any concerns are identified and tackled promptly. The school's procedures to safeguard pupils are good.

Pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development is good. The Catholic ethos permeates the school resulting in a caring community which supports each other. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are courteous to everyone. Pupils make a very positive contribution to the school and many take on a range of responsibilities which help other pupils at playtimes and lunchtime. Pupils say they feel safe and know how to stay healthy. They are developing an adequate range of skills which will support them in their future lives.

In discussion with some pupils one said, 'We are taught to live life to the full, to make life as good as we can for ourselves and for others around us.' and this sums up the beliefs and values within the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' attainment by:
 - implementing the best practice in teachers' marking in all classes
 - ensuring that all pupils know what they need to do next to improve their work
 - informing parents and carers what their child needs to do to improve their work
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to evaluate their learning.
- Improve the curriculum by ensuring children become more involved in planning their learning and have a better understanding of British society.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before the next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

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Historically, almost all pupils' academic attainment, progress and achievement was very low. In 2009, the school data and the Year 6 national tests showed the first signs of this situation improving. In this academic year the improvements have been dramatic and pupils are making good progress and their attainment is rising rapidly. This is because there are some new teachers in the school, all teachers are successfully implementing the good training that they have recently received and a rigorous system, which holds teachers to account for the progress each individual child is making in their class, has been introduced. School data and inspection evidence show that a large majority of pupils are working at the expected levels for their age in English and mathematics. The excellent use made of the new systems for monitoring pupil progress ensures that any

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

pupil who is falling behind is quickly identified and provided with additional support to help them catch up. The positive impact of the school's work is very evident across all the different ability groups. The much improved teaching is having a very positive impact on pupils' enjoyment and achievement. Pupils told inspectors they want to come to school because they 'love' learning and they enjoy their lessons. This has resulted in their good behaviour and attitudes to learning.

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	4
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
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
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Focussed and very effective support from the executive headteacher, the federated school and the local authority has helped teachers to improve their practice. Lessons are well organised and purposeful. They proceed at a brisk pace and teachers are focused on what pupils will learn. Teachers use a range of strategies to ensure that all pupils are included in the lesson. Tasks are challenging and interesting and well matched to pupils needs. Most teachers however do not encourage pupils to evaluate the progress they have made during the lesson and identify any additional support they may need. The marking of pupils work is up to date but there is an inconsistent approach to informing

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

pupils what they need to do next to improve their work. The curriculum has been adequately adapted to provide teachers and their pupils with increased opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. The school has ensured that the curriculum is appropriately balanced and there is sufficient time allocated to all subjects. There is an extensive range of visits and visitors and after school activities which the pupils appreciate greatly. The visits however do not help pupils to engage with the diverse groups of people who make up British society. Teachers do not give pupils opportunities to become even more engaged in their learning through suggesting what they would like to learn in a given topic. The good care, guidance and support provided for the pupils make a strong contribution to their improved achievement. The very good pastoral care provided by all members of the school community ensures that pupils feel safe and valued and, as a result, attendance is average and there are very few persistent absentees.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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?

The rapid improvements in this school are due to a very effective and sensitive executive headteacher who has brought to the school proven rigorous systems to evaluate and improve provision. Her judgements and the inspection judgements are nearly a perfect match. She has recently created a new senior leadership and middle management team who, under her guidance and with continued support from the local authority, are proving to be very effective. All staff and governors have embraced and are diligently implementing the training and support that they have been given from the local authority and St John Bosco School. They are eager for this training to continue so that they can become even better. Due to the newness of the teams, senior leaders, middle managers and governance are satisfactory but improving at a rapid pace. The school carries out all its responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children and, at the time of the inspection, the diligence and tenacity with which everything was checked was exemplary. The school is a happy and cohesive community and equality of opportunity is promoted. The staff know the local area well and the pupils play a part in community activities. The school actively promotes pupils' understanding of different cultures and traditions, however, pupils have few opportunities to experience the diversity in British society. The school community is relishing the journey that it is making to improve the provision for pupils. The school provides satisfactory value for

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

money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
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

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed. Staff have well established and effective working practices. When children join the Nursery many can do less than others of their age. The staff team use assessment appropriately to plan interesting activities which help children to develop. Children have opportunities to work independently, in small groups, or receive individual support from adults. The good teaching ensures that all children, whatever their starting point, make good progress. Resources are good for indoor activities and are adequate in the outside area. Outcomes at the end of the Reception Year are improving, but remain below national figures.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

Most parents and carers are very positive about the school. They feel children are kept safe and their needs are met. A small proportion feel that the school did not help them to support their child's learning at home and inspection evidence would support this view.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at English Martyrs' Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided 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 100 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 210 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	1	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	1	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	0	0	1	100	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	0	0	1	100	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	0	0	1	100	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	0	0	1	100	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	0	0	0	0	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)	0	0	1	100	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	0	0	1	100	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	0	0	1	100	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	0	0	1	100	0	0	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"> ■ 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.



26 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of English Martyrs' Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School,
Sunderland, SR5 5AU

Thank you for being so welcoming when I visited your school with two other inspectors. I am sure that you are pleased to hear that we think your school is giving you a satisfactory education and that it is improving rapidly.

We saw you working hard and making good progress in your lessons. This is helping you to improve the standards you achieve in English and mathematics. To further help you we have asked your teachers to provide you with your next step in learning so that you are clear about what you have to do to make your work even better. We have asked them to let your parents know about this. We enjoyed the many lessons we saw and felt that your teachers were teaching you well. We have asked the teachers to give you opportunities to tell them how well you are learning so that they can tell whether you need any more help. We have also asked them to give you opportunities to tell them what you already know and suggest what you would like to learn in a particular topic. We were thrilled to see how much you appreciate the many visits, visitors and after school clubs. We have asked the headteacher to provide you with some opportunities to experience a broader range of cultures and traditions within England.

There are many good things about your school. We think your behaviour is good. We were very impressed by your courtesy and positive way in which you respond to each other. We think you make a good contribution to the school and the local community. The school helps you stay healthy and you have a secure understanding of how to avoid things that might be dangerous. All the adults care for you very well and this helps you to feel safe and enjoy school. We know that you are proud of your school and that you and all of adults together want to make the school an even better to place to learn.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Barbara Hudson

Lead inspector

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