

St Charles' Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118048
Local Authority	Kingston upon Hull City of
Inspection number	339130
Inspection dates	9–10 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Terry McDermott

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	214
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Canon Michael Loughlin
Headteacher	Mrs Lynda Hoyle
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 18 lessons or parts of lessons. All teachers were seen teaching, some of them twice. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors, and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the books of pupils from several different year groups, minutes and records of the governing body, reports from the School Improvement Partner, and the school's monitoring records. Responses from 73 parents and carers to the Ofsted questionnaire were analysed and considered, along with responses to questionnaires from staff and pupils.

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

- the quality and continuity of learning experiences for all pupils in the school, given the high proportion of pupils arriving at different times of the school year and the significant recent increases in the proportion of these not speaking any English
- the quality of support provided in general, and, in particular, through the curriculum and in Early Years Foundation Stage, for non-English speaking pupils
- the specific actions taken by the school to improve pupils' progress and standards, since neither actions nor their impacts are clearly evident in the school's self-evaluation.

Information about the school

This average-sized school serves an area close to the centre of Hull. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of pupils of minority ethnic heritage is above average. The proportion of pupils who do not speak English as their first language is above average and has risen rapidly since the previous inspection. There are around 20 different languages spoken by pupils at home. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average, though the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need is above average. The proportion of pupils entering or leaving the school other than at the usual times is well above average. The school holds several awards including the International Schools Award and Healthy Schools Status.

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. It is calmly and methodically dealing with rapid, often daily changes to its pupil population, in accordance with its strongly Catholic ethos of building relationships based on Gospel values. The stability, determination and sense of confidence provided by the headteacher are crucial to this.

The school has outstanding strengths in all the aspects of care, guidance and support that it provides for its pupils. This is recognised by parents and carers, by sponsoring corporate organisations, and by partner schools who seek advice from the school on dealing with their own similar issues. These strengths are underpinned by the inclusive and effective Early Years Foundation Stage which provides a secure start for pupils' self-declared feelings of safety, security and enjoyment. The curriculum, with a strong focus on the personal and emotional development of all pupils but particularly those whose circumstances have made them most vulnerable, further supports their well-being. Together, these provide continuity of learning experiences which lead directly to pupils' outstanding spiritual, social, moral and cultural development.

The quality of teaching in Years 1 to 6 is inconsistent and this limits the academic progress pupils make. Examples of outstanding classroom practice were observed, when pupils made excellent learning gains, but this was not always the case. Pupils' progress slowed in those lessons where explanations were too lengthy, or where work was not well matched to individuals' different learning needs.

The curriculum is good and is structured to ensure support for newly arrived pupils who speak little or no English. The provision of many extra-curricular 'hands on' activities engages pupils well and encourages team working, trustworthiness, and the taking of responsibility. This is a strong factor in pupils' excellent contribution to the school and wider community.

Self-evaluation is accurate, and the school is well aware of its strengths and weaknesses. The school relies heavily on the expertise and dedication of senior leaders. Middle managers, though fully committed to the school, are not active enough in monitoring and evaluating rigorously the academic progress pupils make. While the school has coped admirably with recent significant changes to its intake, it has only partially addressed issues relating to the quality of teaching identified at the last inspection. Therefore, the school has satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards and improve achievement by:

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- ensuring that all lessons quickly present pupils with opportunities for active or independent learning
 - ensuring that teachers make more effective use of the information they hold on what pupils know and can do, to set tasks which meet their individual learning needs more accurately
 - ensuring that leaders at all levels check much more closely and robustly on the academic learning taking place in those areas for which they hold responsibility.
- 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 are happy in school, and enjoy being in lessons. Relationships are always very positive. Their learning in lessons is satisfactory and the work seen in their books confirms that their academic progress over time is also satisfactory. The large proportion of pupils who, on arrival from different parts of the world, do not speak English at all are very well supported by skilful teaching assistants to make at least satisfactory progress from often very low starting points. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same progress as others because of the well-planned support they receive. Boys and girls make similar progress. There is no systemic underachievement. Pupils wear their distinctive school uniforms with pride. Their behaviour is good in and out of classrooms. They get on well together, and are always prepared to help or befriend newcomers or younger pupils who may feel lonely or upset. They willingly share their thoughts and ideas in lessons because they are confident that they will get a fair hearing. Pupils are unanimous that they feel safe and are well looked after, and can explain why this is so. They express the view strongly that bullying, 'does not exist here because we all look after each other'. They are completely confident that adults in the school will quickly and fairly sort out any issues that might arise. Most understand the benefits to be gained from exercise and a healthy diet.

Pupils are deeply involved in community activities within the school, and with other schools in the region, nationally, and internationally, and this contributes to their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school council is involved in improvements to the grounds of the school. Other pupils act as librarians, break time buddies, dining room monitors, as members of the green team, and run the school branch of a high street bank. All pupils are involved in raising funds for Cafod, either through personal donations, or as part of fund-raising activities which they help to organise. Attendance has improved markedly in recent months due to the relentless and concerted efforts of the school, and is now at the national average. Pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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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	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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	1

How effective is the provision?

Pupils enjoy lessons and work well most of the time because their behaviour is good. In most lessons, where teaching is good or better, work is fast paced, interesting, and challenges pupils to think things through for themselves. Pupils like this way of working and often suggest to each other how they might improve their work. In these lessons, learning is rapid and soundly based. In some other lessons, too much time is wasted as pupils listen to extended descriptions of what they are going to do, instead of being encouraged to get on with it. In some other cases, all the pupils in class are given the same piece of work to do. Some find the work simple and finish quickly; others find the work too hard and never really get started. In these lessons, learning is slower than it might be.

The curriculum is good overall, and meets statutory requirements. The wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities offered by the school have something to attract everyone. Participation rates in sporting, cultural and social activities are high, because pupils are proud to, 'put our school on display'. Excellent relationships between adults and pupils, and between the pupils themselves, are central to the school's excellent pastoral provision. Pupils and their families are well known to staff and this ensures that care and support for each individual is always available as required. The care and support for all vulnerable pupils is outstanding, and is crucial to pupils' excellent personal development. Links with outside professional and other agencies are

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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used promptly and effectively when the need arises. The impact of the recently appointed attendance officer on improving pupils' attendance is marked.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

As a result of effective work by the headteacher and senior colleagues, the school has been able to consolidate during the recent times of significant change. Staff morale is high, and all adults are strongly committed to the work of the school. School self-evaluation is accurate. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, however, is done by too few people, and this restricts the school's capacity for further improvement.

Provision for community cohesion within and outside the school is outstanding.

Links with contrasting small rural schools in England, and with schools in Poland, South Africa, and France widen pupils' horizons, and build a solid understanding and acceptance of diversity. The school is vigilant in ensuring the welfare and safety of its pupils. Safeguarding procedures are rigorous, all staff training is up to date, and at the time of the inspection, government requirements were met extremely well.

Links with large businesses provide a wide range of additional physical and human resources to help the school to raise pupils' aspirations.

The promotion of equality of opportunity by the school is good. The school has a clear picture of the performance of different groups of pupils, and is a harmonious place, with no evidence of any form of discrimination. However, the attainment of many pupils is still not good enough. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are deeply committed to the school and provide good support, but they have not been able to hold it fully to account for its performance. Partnerships with parents are good in both pastoral and academic matters. The school is working assiduously to raise parents' ambition and aspiration for their children's learning in its drive to improve the attainment of pupils. The school gives 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

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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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

The starting points for children who enter the Nursery are low in relation to expectations for their age. A majority of children joining the Nursery class are recent immigrants to Britain from many parts of the world, and most of them have no knowledge of English. These children are emotionally very vulnerable and insecure. All aspects of children's communication, speaking and listening, reading, and writing are very limited, and their personal, social and emotional development is disrupted. Because provision is good, all children get off to a good start and make good progress in these and other areas of learning in both Nursery and Reception classes. Children are able to engage in a wide range of learning activities specifically developed by the school to overcome the restrictions imposed by language. Children become confident to make their own choices about where and how they want to learn.

Welfare arrangements are very good; close and effective links with families ensure that children settle in rapidly. Adults are very patient and supportive, and provide good role models from which children learn to play and work together in complete harmony. Children trust the adults implicitly and very quickly learn to behave sensibly and sensitively, and to get on with each other, whatever their backgrounds. Their personal, social and emotional development is good. The habits learned in Nursery and Reception classes provide a very strong foundation for the continuing good relationships between pupils as they move through the school.

Leadership and management are effective. Adults have a clear understanding of what children know and can do, because they record meticulously the progress they make. Adults rightly focus on successfully building children's communication skills, widening their vocabulary, and raising their self-esteem and self-confidence. This ensures that, despite sometimes remarkably high levels of mobility that may limit both personal and academic progress most children are reaching expected levels in their personal development by the time they leave the Reception class. Communication, language and literacy skills remain below those expected for children of their age.

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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

Seventy seven parents and carers returned the Ofsted questionnaire. They were unanimous that the school keeps their children safe. The very large majority were happy with the work of the school. A small number of parents and carers disagreed that unacceptable behaviour was tackled effectively. Inspectors observed only good behaviour around the school at breaks and lunchtimes. They therefore asked several pupils if they felt threatened or unsafe. The pupils were unanimous that poor behaviour was rare, stopped quickly and fairly, and they did not feel that it caused any learning time to be lost.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Charles' 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 73 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 214 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	52	71	19	26	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	58	79	15	21	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	36	49	32	44	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	41	56	29	40	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	43	59	29	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	36	49	31	42	4	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	38	52	32	44	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)	35	48	34	47	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	36	49	33	45	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	35	48	31	42	3	4	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	42	30	41	5	7	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	42	58	24	33	1	1	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	48	66	22	30	1	1	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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.



11 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Charles' Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, Hull, HU2 9AA

Thank you for making us so welcome when we inspected your school recently. We were impressed with your politeness, good manners and the excellent way you all look after each other. We particularly appreciated your good behaviour and attitudes to learning in lessons.

We found that St Charles' is a satisfactory school, but that it has excellent strengths in the way it makes you all welcome, in the way it pays very close attention to ensuring that you are all safe and happy, and in the way it supports each individual one of you, should you ever need it. We are sure about this because you told us this when we spoke to you.

However, we found that it could do some things better than it does at present. So I have asked the adults who lead, manage and teach in the school to do the following things to help you to make better progress. I want them to ensure that:

- teachers get lessons off to a prompt start, so that you can have more opportunities to learn interesting things for yourselves, instead of just listening about them
- work is planned and set so that none of you are given things to do that are too easy or too hard
- those adults who are responsible for different aspects of the school's work, check regularly that you are learning enough in lessons.

You can help St Charles' to get even better by continuing to be the hard working and happy young people you already are, who enjoy being in school and find learning interesting and exciting, and who behave well.

Good luck to you all for the future.

Yours sincerely

Terry McDermott

Lead inspector

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