

The Good Shepherd Catholic Primary, Arnold

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122812
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	354324
Inspection dates	23–24 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Vivienne McTiffen

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	370
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ruth Millington
Headteacher	Gerard Whittle
Date of previous school inspection	27 September 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Twenty-two lessons or parts of lessons and an assembly were seen. All teachers were observed once and some were seen twice. Meetings were held with staff, pupils and school leaders, including governors. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at development planning, tracking data on pupils' progress, teacher assessments and planning, safeguarding policies and procedures and samples of pupils' work. In addition, 126 parental questionnaires were analysed.

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

- pupils' attainment and progress, especially in writing and science
- how well teachers use assessment information to match work to different abilities within their classes
- the involvement of managers at all levels in embedding ambition and driving improvement

Information about the school

This is a larger than average sized primary school. As a Catholic school it draws pupils from a wide area. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below national levels but increasing, as is the proportion of those from a minority ethnic group. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Most of these pupils have specific or moderate learning difficulties. There are currently no pupils with statements of special educational need.

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

This good school is thought of very highly by pupils and parents, who value the outstanding range of enrichment experiences that promote pupils' well-being by developing talents, skills and confidence. Pupils speak enthusiastically of their involvement in challenging but exciting activities. There is an excellent level of care for all pupils and especially those with specific needs, who thrive alongside their peers. High levels of tolerance and understanding create a strong school ethos and an atmosphere of harmony, trust and equality. This is mirrored by pupils' impeccable behaviour and very positive attitudes. Their understanding of how to remain safe is excellent, as is their spiritual, moral and social development. Cultural understanding is developing well. A recent visit to an Islamic school made a very good contribution to pupils' understanding of religions and cultures beyond their own.

Attainment in English and mathematics is well above average. Regular teaching of linking sounds to letters and the 'Big Write' is filtering through the school and improving the quality of pupils' writing, an area identified by the previous inspection as one for improvement. Exciting topics such as 'Pirates' motivate boys to write by involving them in work they find interesting. Although attainment in science has remained above average over time, a dip in recent results has led the school to identify areas for development. There is not enough emphasis on extending pupils' scientific skills nor in measuring how well they are doing in the subject.

Pupils make good progress because teaching is good. Teachers know pupils well and develop very positive relationships. Teaching assistants are well informed about activities and support learning effectively. Well-paced lessons maintain interest and engage pupils in a variety of tasks. Teachers' use of assessment information has improved since the last inspection. However, work is not always consistently well-matched to the needs of all abilities. At the start of lessons pupils know what they will be learning and what they need to do to succeed. Many are aware of their current standards because teachers inform them of their levels. However, this is not so clearly conveyed by teachers' marking in books, where comments on how to improve are not always consistent.

Leaders have high expectations of staff, although sometimes monitoring is not precise enough in informing teachers how to improve and build upon existing good practice. Since the last inspection, a rigorous system has been developed to check and track pupils' progress. This provides valuable information about how well pupils are doing in English and mathematics and highlights those who are underachieving. The school's strengths and areas for development are clearly identified through regular self-evaluation. The governing body actively monitors the work of the school and shows

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determination in challenging and supporting it. Parents' views have been taken into account in respect of class sizes and lunchtime supervision, with a beneficial effect on learning, safety and well-being. In the light of these improvements and current development plans, the school is in a good position to continue to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in science by:
 - widening the curriculum to ensure the progressive development and application of skills
 - developing a system to regularly measure how well pupils are doing.
- Systematically build upon existing good practice to raise levels of all teaching to good or better by:
 - matching work more precisely to meet the full range of abilities
 - ensuring marking consistently helps pupils understand how to improve.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Most pupils start in the reception classes with abilities above those expected for their age. By the time they reach the end of Year 6, pupils make good progress to attain well above average standards, especially in English and mathematics. Moderate or specific learning difficulties and disabilities are identified early and extremely well supported. As a result, these pupils, and the few from minority ethnic backgrounds, or who speak English as an additional language, make good progress. Teaching assistants play a vital role in supporting these pupils and helping them to succeed, often through individually tailored learning programmes.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and engage in activities with zest. This was seen to good effect in a mathematics lesson when pupils imaginatively used a line graph to catalogue the events leading up to a robbery. They excitedly discussed their ideas with each other, leading to the development of a detective story. Pupils applied their mathematical skills to a real-life situation and worked well together to solve a problem. Pupils have a good understanding of important factors affecting their health, especially involvement in physical activities which are very well promoted by the school. During the inspection, pupils of all ages engaged in 'Fitness Fortnight' and Year 1 pupils selected ingredients to make healthy snacks. Pupils say they feel very safe at school at all times, a view strongly supported by parents and carers. There are very good relationships and pupils confidently report that any problems they may have are dealt with effectively. They are very willing to listen to the views of others and are open to new ideas and experiences. Pupils value their school community. They take their role as school councillors very seriously and older pupils help younger ones at lunchtimes and in the playground. These roles are undertaken with commitment and in exemplary fashion although pupils' interaction in the wider community is not so substantial. Well-developed basic skills and personal qualities mean pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education

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and future economic well-being. The school strongly promotes outstanding behaviour, both in lessons and around the school. Attendance has remained consistently above average in recent years and has improved even further recently, reflecting the pupils enjoyment of school life.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and learning, although, on occasion, some pupils struggle or find work too easy because there is insufficient match to ability. When resources are used well, lessons are interesting and motivate pupils. For example, in a literacy lesson, very good links between reading and writing helped pupils find appropriate words to describe characters, based on a story they had read. This well-paced lesson fired imaginations and made learning fun by using a range of different teaching styles and resources. Teachers make good use of time at the end of lessons to check pupils' learning and enable them to share their work with others. During this time, teachers build upon pupils' learning and correct misconceptions, but ways to improve are not so consistently indicated in pupils' books.

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 curriculum provides effective opportunities for learning, leading to pupils' well developed literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. Sporting, drama and musical activities, such as residential visits and school performances, considerably enrich the curriculum, many of which are the result of effective partnerships. There are some good examples of cross-curricular work through topics, especially in history and geography. For example, when learning about the Victorians, pupils apply literacy skills to write at length about famous people. However, this approach is currently being consolidated to ensure the development of scientific skills and the application of numeracy, literacy and ICT skills more fully across subjects. Excellent attention is given to all aspects of care and very good links are developed with parents and external agencies to support pupils with specific needs. Older pupils feel very well prepared for their move to secondary school because transition arrangements, and those for younger children starting school, are very effective.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
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?

The headteacher and his staff strive to secure improvements in the already good provision and well above average academic outcomes. Middle managers and subject leaders monitor provision and identify areas for development. This has led to current plans to develop the science curriculum more fully. The school has highly positive relationships with most groups of parents and carers, and there are well defined and established channels for regular communication. Equality of opportunity is central to its work and there is no evidence of discrimination. Robust safeguarding systems adopt recommended good practice to ensure pupils remain safe. The promotion of community cohesion is developing well, with a positive effect on pupils. Because of this, those from different backgrounds get on extremely well together. There are strong links with the church, the immediate community and beyond, through liaison with other schools nationally and abroad.

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

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	
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make a good start in the inviting and well organised reception classes. Good teaching means children do well. By the time they enter Year 1, most reach beyond the levels expected for their age, especially in reading and writing, which, for some, are weaker areas when they come to school. Strong emphasis is placed on linking sounds with letters and access to books, often linked to topics. For example, during the inspection, the story of Postman Pat's holiday helped children identify different destinations before writing about holidays and sorting winter and summer clothes into suitcases. In the outdoor area, water play involved sea creatures. Staff used these activities very well to remind children about the dangers of the sun. Children develop a good understanding of how to keep safe and healthy. Behaviour is very good. Children get on well together, share resources and help with tidying up. All are included, especially those with special needs, who are very well supported. There is a good balance between tasks led by adults and those children choose for themselves, although systems to assess children's responses are not fully in place. Adults work well together. There is a common sense of purpose with thorough regard to children's welfare and safety.

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

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Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of questionnaire returns from parents and carers are positive. All who responded feel the school meets their children's needs and keeps them safe and that teaching and leadership are good. Although a very small minority of parents and carers feel they would like to be better informed about their child's progress and how to support learning, inspectors found the school has clear lines of communication to enable parents and carers to speak to staff. This is reflected in a comment that, 'The school has a strong parent/teacher link. We have always enjoyed an 'open door' policy of speaking directly to a member of staff with any queries or worries about our children.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Good Shepherd Catholic Primary, 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 126 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 370 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	92	73	33	26	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	101	80	25	20	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	71	56	51	40	3	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	82	65	40	32	3	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	92	73	34	27	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	71	56	49	39	5	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	77	61	48	38	1	1	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)	71	56	42	33	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	79	63	43	34	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	75	60	44	35	2	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	58	46	58	46	2	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	89	71	33	26	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	96	76	29	23	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

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.



25 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Good Shepherd Catholic Primary, Arnold, Nottingham NG5 4LT

Thank you for the very warm and extremely polite welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We were very impressed by your excellent behaviour and your serious involvement in your responsibilities. You especially seemed to be enjoying the sports activities that we saw. We enjoyed talking to you about the very good range of trips and visits that the school organises, which you obviously find exciting and interesting.

You attend a good school and this is what we found out about it. Most of you make good progress in your work so that, by the time you leave school, you reach levels that are well above those expected for your age, especially in English and mathematics. You have an excellent understanding of how to be safe and the school looks after you exceptionally well. You all get on extremely well together and you are developing a good understanding of cultures and religions different to your own.

To help you to do even better we are asking your headteacher and his staff to make the following improvements:

- to help you to develop and use better scientific skills and to devise a regular system to check how well you are doing in science
- to check that teachers give you work that is correctly matched to your abilities
- to ensure that all teachers' marking is helpful and lets you know how you can improve.

We are sure you will continue to enjoy your learning and that you will help the school to achieve these things by always trying your best.

Yours sincerely

Vivienne McTiffen

Lead inspector

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