

St Bede's RC Voluntary Aided Primary School

Claypath Lane, South Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE33 4PG

Inspection dates 20–21 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils work hard and are very enthusiastic about their learning. Outstanding progress is made throughout the school and by the time pupils leave standards are much higher than those found nationally.
- These very high standards have been maintained year on year and apply to all pupils in the school. Those who are eligible for the pupil premium achieve particularly well.
- At each key stage the school is extremely good at making sure pupils are very well prepared for their next step.
- Teaching of literacy and mathematics is exceptional. Lessons are interesting and lively. Pupils know what is expected of them and get on confidently with their work. Occasionally teaching in some other subjects does not always present the right level of challenge for all pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They are polite, confident and respectful towards each other and adults. Parents are highly supportive and feel their children are very safe in school.
- The ethos of the school is wonderful. Everyone involved, including governors, is passionate about the school and fully involved in its work. Everyone is proud of how they contribute to its success.
- Highly supportive teamwork led sensitively by the headteacher has enabled the school to look honestly and thoughtfully at how to improve further. Staff have worked successfully to improve the teaching of writing across the school. This has led to sustained improvement since the last inspection.
- A varied and interesting curriculum includes a wide range of visits out and events in school. The school is rightly proud of its achievements in sport. All pupils are encouraged to participate in a wide range of sporting activities, while the school teams continue to be highly successful.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in all classes and saw 14 lessons.
- An inspector listened to pupils read.
- The inspectors looked at the work in pupils' books in all subjects to get a view of current achievement and progress over time.
- The inspectors took account of the 34 responses from parents to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the three letters they received from parents.
- An inspector talked to a group of pupils about their views of the school and how safe they felt.
- Meetings were held with five members of the governing body including the Chair, staff and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at a number of documents including the school improvement plan, data on pupils' progress and reports about teaching. The inspectors also looked at the school website.

Inspection team

Nora Waugh, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sonya Williamson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school. The Nursery class is part time, running each morning.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. A small but increasing minority are from other ethnic backgrounds. The percentage speaking English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported through the pupil premium is close to average. (The pupil premium is funding provided to support pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and the children of services personnel.)
- Fewer pupils leave or enter school except at the usual starting points than in most other schools.
- The school is above floor targets.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure the teaching of subjects other than English and mathematics always presents the right level of challenge to pupils.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that vary but which for most are below those typically expected for their age. This is particularly true in personal and social development and in language. Staff work hard to help children develop the independence and learning skills that will be valuable throughout their time in school.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and, although standards are still below those found nationally at the end of Reception, strengths are beginning to emerge. These are evident in children's high performance in reading and their confidence in using letters and sounds to support this.
- Progress continues to be very strong throughout Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 2 standards are above average. Attainment in reading is particularly strong, with a larger proportion attaining Level 3 than do nationally.
- Pupils continue to make excellent progress across Key Stage 2 and leave Year 6 with standards well above those found nationally. In 2012 all pupils achieved Level 4 in English and almost all in mathematics, with more than 50% achieving Level 5 in all subjects. These very high levels of attainment have been maintained since the last inspection with improvements each year.
- High attainment is underpinned by excellent progress. All pupils make the progress expected of them and very many do better in all subjects. Work in books and the schools' tracking data indicate that these high levels of achievement will be maintained this year.
- Systems for checking pupils' progress are meticulously implemented throughout school. Pupils at risk of falling behind in their learning are quickly identified and the right support put in place to prevent this from happening.
- This school actively promotes equality of opportunity and has high expectations of all pupils. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make very good progress. This is because of the very good, tailored support they receive. Pupils from minority ethnic groups achieve as well as other pupils in the school. Those whose first language is not English are supported very well including by the use of sign and/or actions to reinforce meaning.
- The school is justifiably proud of how well pupils eligible for the pupil premium achieve. Outcomes for these pupils are outstanding. All pupils eligible for the pupil premium attained the nationally expected Level 4 in English and mathematics and made the expected two levels progress in both subjects. This was above the national outcomes for pupils not eligible for the pupil premium and the result of well-thought-out uses of the funding that ensure extra support is available for pupils when they need it.
- Pupils read widely and enthusiastically. It is an established strength of the school but a lot of work has gone into ensuring writing is as good. Younger pupils are confident to use their knowledge of letters and sounds to tackle a wide range of writing. Older pupils write confidently and use their skills equally well in other subjects.
- The school identified that at the higher levels of attainment mathematics was not quite as good as English. They are tackling this enthusiastically and the increased opportunities for problem solving are evident in work in books and in discussions with pupils.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- The rapid and sustained progress of pupils is underpinned by outstanding teaching. Teaching has improved since the last inspection and much of it is now outstanding.
- Pupils have a very impressive attitude to learning. They work extremely hard and concentrate fully on the task they have been given. Pupils help each other as needed. This enables teachers and support staff to focus on their teaching without interruption.
- Relationships are excellent. The obvious enjoyment and enthusiasm teachers have for their work

are infectious and shared by pupils. They listen attentively both to adults and each other and are very keen to respond to questions.

- Lessons are very well organised and structured. It is clear to pupils what they are to learn. Supporting materials, such as lists of technical words linked to a Year 3 visit, are prepared for each child. This enables pupils to work efficiently at their own pace.
- Teachers are highly skilled practitioners. They are extremely good at matching work to the abilities of pupils, particularly in literacy and mathematics. In whole-class sessions a variety of teaching methods are used to ensure everyone is involved and is making progress. Occasionally, when teaching other subjects, the level of work given does not allow all pupils to make the same very good progress.
- Marking is consistently very good. Pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve their work. They are involved with their teachers in assessing whether or not they have achieved it. During lessons teachers are quick to pick up on misunderstandings or where more challenge is needed, and adapt their teaching in response.
- Pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to develop their reading, writing and mathematical skills while learning other subjects. This is particularly true in history, geography and religious education. Extremely high standards of spelling and presentation are maintained across all subjects.
- Additional support and interventions are used very effectively to help pupils who need extra practice. Parents are encouraged to be involved in children's learning and the website gives them a lot of very helpful guidance in doing this. Appropriate homework is set for all classes.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The school is warm and welcoming with a very supportive ethos. One parent was delighted that her daughter loves school and "is blossoming into a happy, confident young lady", while another commented that "this school looks after every child who comes through the door". They summed up the views of many.
- Behaviour around school, at break, lunchtime and in lessons is excellent. Outside, at break and lunchtimes, almost all pupils were either playing games or practising basketball skills. It was remarkable how aware they were of each other and careful not to get in each other's way.
- The highest standards are expected on all occasions. For example, work on the Olympic values has been continued so that pupils representing the school on sports teams now sign a contract reinforcing the high standards of behaviour expected of them when representing the school.
- Behaviour logs show incidents including bullying are very rare. Pupils said how safe they felt in school.
- Pupils talked articulately about the importance of internet safety and the risk of cyber-bullying. The school website offers good additional information for parents about the importance of e-safety.
- There is a culture of pupils helping and supporting each other. Older pupils help younger ones and the well-established house system reinforces this approach extremely well.
- Attendance is above average and there is very little persistent absence. Punctuality is excellent.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Leadership is outstanding at all levels. A culture of supportive teamwork has been established that serves the school exceptionally well.
 - The headteacher believes passionately in giving all children the opportunity to achieve as much as they can. She has high expectations of herself and others: a feature shared by everyone involved with the school, including the governing body.
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- Senior leaders share the headteacher's absolute commitment to improve every aspect of teaching. Data are carefully scrutinised to identify any possible areas for improvement. Coordinators check the quality of teaching in subjects thoroughly. Rigorous plans for improvement are put in place and evaluated regularly to make sure they are effective.
 - The school improvement plan identifies accurately the main priorities for the school. Individual targets and professional development are linked to this, enabling the already very high standards of teaching and outcomes for pupils to improve further.
 - An excellent range of visits is designed to reinforce learning and add to pupils' experiences. New topics are introduced through a "launch week" to inspire and motivate pupils. Sporting excellence is a powerful feature of the school. It has just achieved the Gold Games Kitemark for its commitment to competitive sport.
 - Sport features highly in the increasing variety of clubs and activities available to pupils out of school hours.
 - Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has remained outstanding since the last inspection. The school is part of the local faith community with strong links with the church and the wider community. It is highly inclusive and all pupils thrive in a warm and caring environment. Any possible discrimination is dealt with quickly and effectively but is an extremely rare occurrence.
 - Leaders and governors value highly the objective view provided by the local authority.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are enthusiastic about the school and determined to be outstanding in their contribution. As one said in interview, "We want to be as professional as the staff". Led excellently by the Chair of the Governing Body they have taken part in training and worked tirelessly to develop their role. They work with subject coordinators to develop their understanding of what happens in classrooms and are proud to offer suggestions for improving provision, such as extending the range of maps available. They are rigorous in their scrutiny of teachers' and the school's performance and are well-informed when making decisions about pay. They ensure that safeguarding requirements are met and also work when needed with the wider community to ensure the safety of pupils in school.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	108715
Local authority	South Tyneside
Inspection number	403072

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	233
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Margaret Meling
Headteacher	Nicole Park
Date of previous school inspection	2 July 2008
Telephone number	0191 4560108
Fax number	0191 4271694
Email address	info@st-bedes.s-tyneside.sch.uk

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