

St Vincent's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101239
Local Authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	276476
Inspection dates	13–14 December 2005
Reporting inspector	Judith Dawson

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 on roll	
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Betty Hetherington Mrs Rachel Mahon
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Burnside Road Dagenham RM8 2JN
Telephone number	020 8270 6695
Fax number	020 8270 6696

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St. Vincent's is a slightly smaller than average Roman Catholic primary school. More pupils than usual are entitled to free school meals. The number of pupils with special educational needs, including statements, is similar to most other schools. In the last two years, an increasingly large number of pupils have joined the school after the normal entry date. The population now includes over 60 percent of pupils from minority ethnic groups, considerably more than at the time of the last inspection. About 18 percent of the pupils do not have English as a first language but very few are in the first stages of learning English. Children's attainment on entry to the nursery is below average, especially in speech and language. The school has been awarded Investors in People.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade:

What the school should do to improve further

* Ensure that pupils know how to evaluate their work and what they need to do to excel *
Develop stronger links between subjects* Ensure that all more able pupils have sufficient challenge to enable them to reach their full potential.

Achievement and standards

Grade:

Personal development and well-being

Grade:

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade:

Teaching is good throughout the school and was outstanding in some lessons observed during the inspection. In one such lesson, the teacher extended pupils' knowledge of poetry styles and allowed them to select from these to write their own. Excellent use of pupils' work as examples generated self-esteem and considerable effort. The needs of pupils are generally well catered for and pupils make good progress. Sometimes lessons lack sufficient challenge for more able pupils to enable them to reach their full potential. Teaching assistants are effective and give good support to pupils with learning difficulties. Teachers question pupils very well, encouraging pupils to explain and expand their ideas and opinions. Resources are used well and teachers use computer projectors very effectively to provide focus for the lessons. Teachers mark pupils' English work well, ensuring pupils know what they need to do in order to improve. The school has plans to extend this to other subjects in the current year. Regular assessments of pupils' progress help teachers plan lessons to meet pupils' needs. Pupils are beginning to evaluate their own work but are not using this to set their own targets for improvement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade:

The curriculum is good and firmly rooted in Christian values. It is broad, balanced and follows the National and Foundation Stage curriculums. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship is good. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and those pupils with English as an additional language are met well. Teaching assistants are used effectively to support these pupils' learning. Curricular planning is good but links between subjects are not exploited fully. The school is aware of the need for greater use of literacy, mathematics and ICT within other subjects. There is a satisfactory range of extra curricular clubs and activities. The curriculum is enriched and supported by an extensive programme of visits and visitors. Outside agencies and parents are supportive and make an effective contribution to pupils' achievements. The nursery provides a good start to school and very good links with the secondary school support pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade:

The school provides a calm and orderly working environment where children feel safe, secure and valued. Child protection and health and safety arrangements are good and all adults working in the school are fully aware of them. Pupils feel safe and confident in approaching adults for help and advice. Very good systems to track the academic and personal development of all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties, enable teachers to establish their pupils' needs well and provide good support and guidance. There are good systems for supporting pupils new to the school enabling them to swiftly settle into school life. Pupils care for and support each other very well. There is good liaison with parents who express a very high level of satisfaction with the school's care. A parent commented that 'the school provides a caring atmosphere that helps children to develop'.

Leadership and management

Grade:

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Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you very much indeed for your friendliness and help during our visit to your school. You showed us how proud you are of the school, your teachers and each other and how much you enjoy being at school. You told us that St. Vincent's is a good school and we agree with you. Many thanks to the new pupils and the school council who gave us your views.

I should like to tell you some of the things that are so good about your school: * your behaviour, care for each other and willingness to take responsibility are very good and you hardly ever miss school; * your school is a happy place because you are taught well, you work hard and understand how learning helps you to make the most of your lives; * the headteacher and other leaders run the school well, helping your teachers to provide you with the skills you need.

There are a few things your school could do to make it even better: * help you decide for yourselves how good your work is so that you can set your own targets to make it even better; * plan more opportunities for you to use your English, mathematics and ICT skills within other subjects and make better links between subjects; * Make sure that the most capable pupils amongst you always have work that makes them think. We enjoyed visiting your school and hearing the Infant Nativity.