



St Bede's RC Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 108505
LEA Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number 277989
Inspection dates 9 November 2005 to 10 November 2005
Reporting inspector Mr Tom Grieveson

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Howlett Hall Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Denton Burn
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0191 2743430
Number on roll	217	Fax number	0191 2747919
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr David McShane
Date of previous inspection	1 February 2000	Headteacher	Mr Michael Scurr

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 9 November 2005 - 10 November 2005	Inspection number 277989
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector.

Description of the school

St. Bede's RC primary is a smaller than average sized school located in a residential area of inner west Newcastle upon Tyne. Such is the school's popularity that it draws approximately 1/3 of pupils from beyond its immediate area. There is a broad social mix of families at the school although free school meal entitlement is just above average. A small percentage of pupils come from ethnic minority families but none from households where English is not the first language. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is similar to that seen nationally but currently no pupils have a statement of special educational need.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The inspectors agree with the school's overall evaluation of its effectiveness; St. Bede's is a good school providing good value for money.

The school has successfully addressed the key issues from the previous inspection and provision in most areas is now good. In the Foundation Stage it is satisfactory. However, because of the actions taken, the school has demonstrated both the determination and good capacity for further improvement.

Standards against similar schools have been consistently good. Pupil achievement in 2005 was much improved on previous years and particularly by the more able pupils. Progress is still required however in relation to standards achieved by boys with their writing. Pupils with learning difficulties and those with learning disabilities are supported effectively and make good progress. Teaching and learning are good overall. However, pupils require more opportunities to work independently, demonstrate initiative and make choices in their learning. Provision is also good with very good sporting opportunities and extra-curricular activities available for pupils.

Strong links with parents and other agencies contributes effectively to pupils' learning. Their personal development is good. Pupils clearly enjoy being at school and taking part in lessons. Their behaviour is outstanding and attendance is good. The care provided for pupils by the school is also outstanding.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides effective leadership focused on raising standards and promoting the personal well-being of all pupils. The school has an accurate view of its strengths and where it needs to improve further. These areas are appropriately included within the school's improvement plan.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the standards achieved by boys in writing.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to demonstrate greater independence in their work including collaborative learning with their peers.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils enter school with broadly average knowledge and skills. Their personal and social skills are most developed whilst their writing skills require most improvement. In the reception class, the majority make satisfactory progress whilst 25% of pupils make better than expected progress.

Standards in comparison to similar schools have been consistently good over time at Key Stages 1 and 2. Improvements introduced by the school resulted in much higher achievement by 11 year olds in English and mathematics in 2005. More able pupils in particular did extremely well. Consequently, a large majority of pupils reached their challenging targets and more than 33% exceeded them. Boys' achievement in writing

however still lags behind that in reading. Whilst actions taken by the school are beginning to have an effect in this area, further progress is still required. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress and achieve well. This occurs because the school has developed good knowledge about individual pupils and targets provision accurately. These pupils are well supported by the good additional support which they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. Pupils clearly enjoy school and their attendance is above average. Pupils are cheerful and helpful. Their behaviour, both in lessons and around the school, is outstanding. Playtimes are enhanced by the range of activities on offer with good co-operation amongst pupils evident. The school's 'buddy' support system ensures that less confident pupils, or those new to the school, are well supported by others.

Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning. They work hard and enjoy cooperating with others when given opportunities to do so. Older pupils willingly accept the responsibilities which the school offers them. For example, they work in the school office at lunchtime answering the telephone. They support lunchtime staff to care for younger pupils. School councillors represent their classes well, taking their role very seriously. Councillors recognise that the school values their views and acts upon them. Excellent additions to the playground facilities are cited by these pupils as evidence of this.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. For example, children's cultural awareness in particular is promoted strongly by the school. Extensive opportunities are provided to learn about their own culture and those of children in other countries. There is a strong emphasis on charitable giving through such organisations as CAFOD. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and this is reflected in their attitudes and the care they show for others. Pupils demonstrate a positive commitment towards improving their health. Good opportunities are provided by the school for them to do so, for example by furthering their physical well-being through extensive sporting opportunities and the use of external expertise.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall and this ensures that the majority of pupils make good progress. Relationships between staff and pupils are outstanding. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Lessons are planned well and take account of pupils' prior learning. Tasks motivate pupils and engage their interest. Teachers challenge them through the effective use of questioning to extend their learning. Pupils respond readily, they are keen to participate and demonstrate what

they know and can do. Classroom assistants support children effectively, particularly the less able, those with special educational needs and pupils with learning disabilities.

Good use is made of interactive whiteboards to further interest and involve pupils in lessons. When they are afforded opportunities to demonstrate independence in their learning, pupils enjoy working cooperatively with others. This leads to improvement and extends their understanding of the subjects being studied. However, provision in some classes to engage with pupils in this way is limited.

Teachers set challenging targets for pupils and regularly assess their progress against them. This accurately identifies those pupils who require additional support and effective provision is provided for them. These actions contribute directly to the good progress which pupils make. Pupils are not yet directly involved in the target setting process but preparations for this to occur are now well advanced.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Curriculum provision is good. Pupils experience a broad and balanced range of appropriate experiences which effectively meet their needs. This supports the majority of pupils and helps them to make good progress. In the Foundation Stage however, opportunities to benefit from the full range of outdoor learning requires improvement. The school has rightly identified this as an area to develop further.

Provision for pupils in English, mathematics and science are good. Facilities for ICT are much improved reflecting the school's recent investment in new resources. The school effectively extends pupils' skills and creativity through links with outside agencies, out of school activities, visits and visitors. For example, at Key Stage 2 very good provision is made for pupils to learn Italian through an on-going project funded by the Italian Consulate. Year 2 pupils visit the Centre for Life in Newcastle to extend their work about materials. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 experience movement and dance lessons provided by a qualified coach. The school's emphasis on providing an extensive sporting programme contributes directly towards pupils adopting healthy and safe lifestyles.

The physical condition of the school is good and this is maintained to a very high standard of cleanliness. Together with the substantial investment in the outdoor play areas, facilities provide a good basis of support to pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This aspect of the school's work is good with some outstanding features. The aims of the school are well reflected in the atmosphere and ethos created by staff and adhered to by pupils. Staff demonstrate outstanding care and a high commitment to pupil welfare. A close, supportive relationship with parents and other agencies has a strong influence on the children's attendance, behaviour and their attitudes to learning. These factors contribute significantly to the progress which pupils make.

Child protection and risk assessment procedures are good. All staff have received appropriate training and there is full compliance with school policy. The school environment is safe for children, staff and visitors. School councillors report that pupils feel safe, are well cared for and understand the procedures to deal with difficulties when circumstances arise.

Procedures are also good for the early identification of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Parents of these pupils are fully involved in their child's learning programme with good support provided by the school and those outside agencies which support individual pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides clear and effective leadership focused securely on raising standards and promoting the personal well-being of all pupils. He knows his school well and demonstrates outstanding commitment and determination to see it improve further. He receives highly effective support from the deputy head and staff. Consequently, the school is well placed to make further and sustained progress.

The school's own self-evaluation provides an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. The school improvement plan is based upon a sound understanding of where improvements are required and priorities are entirely appropriate. The monitoring of teaching and learning is accurate and purposeful contributing directly to performance management. This has led in turn to better provision for pupils. The school's commitment to the development of its workforce is duly recognised in the award of 'Investors in People.'

Pupil performance is tracked using the very good data supplied by the local education authority and targets are set appropriately. Currently however, there is insufficient involvement of both pupils and parents in the target setting process although planning is well advanced to ensure that this occurs.

Governance is good. Governors are well-informed and very supportive. Their commitment to the school is characterised by the extensive involvement of the chair of governors and other governing body members. Effective decision making ensures that resources are targeted to good effect. The school is well resourced and very well maintained. Teachers use resources well and the day-to-day routines run smoothly supported by efficient school administration.

Staff at the school know the area well and invite parents and members of the community to support much of the school's work. Parents strongly support and value the work of the school by emphasising their confidence in the quality of provision which is made for pupils. They fully endorse the school's own evaluation that St. Bede's RC Primary is a good school.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

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St Bede's RC Primary School

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11 November 2005

Dear Pupils

Thank you very much for making us so welcome recently when we visited your school to carry out the inspection on 9 and 10 November 2005. The report is now complete and I would like to tell you about what it contains.

Your school provides you with a good education. The headteacher and staff work extremely hard to make sure you are provided with good opportunities to learn and do well. Teaching in your school is good and this is shown by the high standards which you achieve.

Your behaviour in all parts of the school is excellent. We were very impressed by your attitudes in lessons and how hard you work. We like the way that you play together and cooperate so that all the outdoor facilities can be used safely. We were also impressed by the way in which you care for each other in school and for other people through your charity work. The 'buddies' do an excellent and responsible job. The older pupils take responsibility for many activities and they do it well. Congratulations, you are all a credit to your school and families.

The staff at St. Bede's provide you with an outstanding level of care. You know a great deal about keeping safe and being healthy. The way you take part in physical activities is very good and you know how important it is.

We were pleased to hear about the work of the School Council. These pupils take their responsibilities very seriously and try hard to improve things for all pupils. They know the school listens because many good things have happened such as the new facilities in the outside play areas.

We have asked your head teacher and staff to make sure the school keeps improving by doing 2 things. Firstly, to help those pupils who need to make more progress with their writing. Secondly to give you more opportunities to work together with your classmates to really show how well you can cooperate and learn together.

Finally, I would like you to thank your parents for all the very useful and important information which they provided about your school. They clearly like St. Bede's and consider it to be a good school. They are right to think so.

Thank you again for making our visit to your school so enjoyable. Please accept my very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Tom Grieveson HMI

Annex B