

# St Augustine's RC Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111717
<b>Local Authority</b>	Middlesbrough
<b>Inspection number</b>	289035
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Graeme Clarke

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	234
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dr Tony Shaw
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Heather Barber
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 February 2003
<b>School address</b>	Gunnergate Lane Coulby Newham Middlesbrough TS8 0TE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01642 599001
<b>Fax number</b>	01642 579100

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

St Augustine's is an average size primary school, which serves mainly Catholic families from the new township of Coulby Newham, a locality where socio-economic characteristics are broadly average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Most pupils are from a White British heritage, and all those from minority ethnic groups speak English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational need, is below average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

St Augustine's provides a good education for its pupils. The headteacher gives very effective leadership to all staff and together they successfully promote the school's Christian ethos and a clear, caring philosophy that every child does matter. Parents have every confidence in the school and hold it in very high regard. One parent's comment sums up their views, 'The teachers are all extremely dedicated, very approachable and totally committed to improving the overall development of my child.'

Pupils throughout the school make good progress in their learning and achieve well as a result of good quality teaching. The senior leadership team analyses each pupil's progress carefully and arranges for prompt and effective support whenever the need arises. Pupils know how well they are doing, and benefit from teacher's praise for their hard work and accomplishments, but when marking their work, teachers do not comment sufficiently to help pupils know clearly what they have to do next to improve. Visits and visitors, together with excellent links with the church, neighbouring schools, the local authority and the community enrich the good curriculum for all pupils, and make a major contribution to their spiritual and cultural development.

Children's abilities are close to average when they begin Nursery. They make good progress through the Foundation Stage and move into Year 1 with high standards in all the early learning goals, which form the basis for their future achievement. They continue to make good progress throughout Key Stage 1, and reached high standards in the 2006 Year 2 assessments. Inspection evidence indicates a similar picture for 2007. Pupils in Key Stage 2 also made good progress. They achieved well to gain standards in the 2006 Year 6 tests that were significantly above average overall. The school met its challenging target for English, but slipped back a little for mathematics. The school has given effective support to all current Year 6 pupils, including those at risk of falling behind, and assessment information shows they are well on track to meet the school's challenging targets.

Outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development successfully prepares pupils to be good citizens and for the next phase of their education. They are very well behaved, considerate and exceptionally polite. Pupils say bullying is rare. They know how to stay safe, conduct themselves well and care for each other. The 'Healthy School' award reflects pupils' thorough awareness of healthy lifestyles, and the school's approach to promote fitness through sensible eating and physical activities. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the school, local and wider communities. Older pupils confidently take on responsibilities such as 'playground buddies', which enhance their sense of purpose. Their good basic skills, outstanding ability to work collaboratively with one another, and experience of secondary school work prepare them exceptionally well for the future.

The headteacher and governors ensure the school is well led and managed. They have a clear perspective on all aspects of its work, although they are somewhat modest in judging some of their accomplishments. They get the best value from their resources, and foster pupils' good progress, personal development and academic achievement well. They have successfully addressed all issues from the last inspection and work with determination to raise standards even higher. The capacity for further improvement is good. Taking all this into account and the funds available to the school, the school gives excellent value for money.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Develop teachers' marking of pupils' work to help them know how well they are doing and how to take their next steps in learning.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well and make good progress in their learning to reach well above average standards.

Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage. From broadly average levels of ability when they join the Nursery, they quickly develop confidence, skills and knowledge and do much better in all areas of learning than expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1. This stands them in good stead for when they move into Year 1.

Following a pattern of previous years, results of teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2006 showed that pupils made good progress through Key Stage 1. They reached significantly above average standards, although the boys did not do quite as well as girls. The school's careful monitoring of pupils currently in Year 2 found their writing standards below expectations. Effective action has accelerated their progress and the latest assessments show they are on track to attain as highly as their counterparts last year.

Overall, standards in the 2006 Year 6 tests were well above average, which also continued the picture of previous years. Notably, the number of pupils gaining the higher levels in science was significantly above the national average. Boys did better than girls in mathematics and science. Gifted and talented pupils made similarly good progress as their classmates. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also make good progress. Last year many did well to attain higher results than pupils with similar educational needs elsewhere. Given their backgrounds and starting points, most pupils achieved well in English and science, but were less successful in mathematics. The school's leadership team identified where attention was needed and this year arranged extensive support to boost the progress of all pupils, with additional help for those at risk of underachievement. Improving mathematics is an area for attention the school identifies, and evidence shows almost all Year 6 pupils are now on course to reach their challenging targets.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

Pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being result from the school's philosophy of care, which the headteacher and staff foster to excellent effect. Of particular note are the many displays of pupils' work in classrooms, halls and corridors that reflect the exceptionally wide range of activities which together contribute to make their spiritual moral, social and cultural development excellent. Pupils behave impeccably well, in lessons and in the communal parts of the school. They are mature in outlook, caring and respectful of each other, and very polite and courteous towards adults. Attendance is above average. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and the friendships they make. They love practical activities, and work hard in class. Older pupils are excitedly looking forward to their forthcoming visit to a residential outdoor activities centre. Pupils know the importance of safety, and of good health and fitness. The school council collects ideas from all pupils and helps improve facilities. For example, at playtimes, pupils who have no-one to play with sit at the 'Buddy Bench,' then are quickly helped

to find a friend. Pupils also willingly help with conservation activities to improve their local environment, the choir bring enjoyment to old people at Christmas time, and they support charitable activities. The Year 6 pupils rightly feel well prepared for their future because their basic skills are well developed and very effective transition arrangements help them look forward to secondary school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers and teaching support staff work very well together. Teachers plan lessons diligently, have high expectations of pupils and place a strong emphasis on consolidating their basic skills. Pupils learn to read, speak and write well, and to use information and communication technology (ICT) skilfully and confidently in many aspects of their work. Teachers foster very good relationships and create a positive, purposeful and relaxed atmosphere and this, coupled with the good attention they give to individuals, successfully encourages pupils' learning. Pupils benefit from working with skilled teaching assistants, and pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. Exceptionally good displays in classrooms and the hall reflect pupils' good standards and celebrate their achievements. These displays give them a wealth of ideas and information to help them succeed. In turn, pupils develop a very positive attitude to learning and make good progress. When marking pupils' work, teachers clearly praise their endeavour and accomplishments, as well as pointing out mistakes for correction. However, their comments are not sufficient to help pupils know clearly what they have to do next to improve their work.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The good curriculum is thoroughly well-organised to meet all the requirements of the National Curriculum. Excellent partnerships, for example with the church, local schools and industry, and a wide range of visits and visitors enrich the knowledge and spiritual and cultural experience of all pupils, including those in the Foundation Stage, so enabling them to achieve well. Pupils were exceptionally enthusiastic about the work they did with a children's book illustrator. She had clearly inspired them, and their superb displays leave a lasting impression. Pupils have many opportunities to broaden their experience and skills in activities available out-of-school; such as, sports, music, chess, science, ICT and cycling proficiency. The strong commitment of the leadership team and all staff to pupils' personal development, enjoyment and preparation for life as young adults are particularly strong features of the curriculum.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 1**

Each child is valued as an individual and the school provides outstanding care, guidance and support. Parents have total confidence in the school and their trust is fully justified. Excellent partnerships with parents and with external agencies, contribute extremely well to uniting everyone in support of pupils' learning. Arrangements to safeguard the welfare of pupils are underpinned by procedures that meet current government requirements, and child protection procedures are in place and up-to-date. Teachers and support staff have a very high level of understanding of the individual needs of all pupils. In turn, all pupils feel safe and secure in

school. The school assesses pupils' work formally each term and, with the support of the local authority, now has clear and useful procedures to track each child's progress. Senior leaders use the information very effectively to highlight gaps in progress and provide additional support to help bolster learning and achievement by individuals or groups.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Good leadership and management throughout the school play a vital part in promoting its Christian ethos. The headteacher's very effective leadership, clear direction, commitment and determination have sustained well above average standards and good achievement year-on-year. Staff with leadership responsibilities, through their common sense of purpose, encourage the very positive climate for learning that all pupils thrive in and enjoy. Governance is excellent. Governors' commitment and diligent participation ensure that the school is well led, managed and administered. They, the headteacher and senior leaders work well in partnership, and do much to ensure the effectiveness of their staff through performance management, up-to-date training and support. Governors and leaders use information about pupils' progress and development very well to share their perceptions of all aspects of the school's work and, although they gauge its quality with some accuracy, they are rather too modest in evaluating the strengths of the care, guidance and support the school offers, and in particular the outstanding extent of their pupils' personal development and well-being. They properly identify areas for development, which focus sharply on raising achievement further, especially by some pupils in mathematics.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

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

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

14 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Augustine's RC Primary School, Middlesbrough, TS8 0TE

I really enjoyed my visit to your school this week. Thank you for helping me when I came into your classrooms to see you at work. You were exceptionally polite and really helpful. I did enjoy talking to you and I was impressed with those of you whom I met. It was great to see how much you enjoy coming to school and how you contribute to school life. I know the headteacher and the staff are all very proud of you.

Your school has a very warm and welcoming atmosphere and is very well organised. I'm pleased that you feel safe and happy because all the adults in the school look after you very well. Many of your lessons are good. I was impressed with the way you work hard and like to take part. I like the way your teachers often share what you are going to do in lessons and the way they help you know how well you are doing. I have asked the school, when your work is marked, to help you know what you have to do to improve.

Some of you will leave at the end of this year to join a new school. You have very many opportunities at St Augustine's Primary School to learn about life and these should stand you in good stead for the future. I hope that you all do really well.

Yours sincerely

Graeme Clarke

Lead Inspector