



St Edward's Catholic Primary

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112906
Local Authority DERBYSHIRE
Inspection number 289459
Inspection dates 3–4 October 2006
Reporting inspector Joyce Cox

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Newhall Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Swadlincote
Age range of pupils	4–11		Derbyshire DE11 0BD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01283 216721
Number on roll (school)	218	Fax number	01283 216721
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Susan Shuttleworth
		Headteacher	Mrs Eilis Field
Date of previous school inspection	18 June 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school serves the Parish of Saint Peter and Paul in Swadlincote and the surrounding villages. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average. Virtually all pupils are from White British backgrounds and all speak English fluently. Attainment on entry to the Reception class is slightly below the local and national expectations for children of this age. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is average, as is the proportion with a statement of special educational need. The school has achieved the Basic Skills Mark twice and a silver Artsmark award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

St Edward's is an outstanding school which gives its pupils an excellent all-round education. In this inclusive setting, with its strong Catholic ethos, pupils from a wide range of backgrounds flourish. Parents overwhelmingly support the school and appreciate all that it provides. One parent writes, 'We are extremely happy and grateful parents who feel our children have been educated to a high standard - with love.' This is because the headteacher is an inspirational leader who has the highest possible aspirations for the school and the pupils. She has skilfully built a staff that is totally committed to school improvement and who strive for excellence in all that they do. Standards are very high and achievement is excellent. Standards have risen year on year since 2001 and are exceptionally high in mathematics, science and reading and are above average in writing by the end of Year 6. All pupils make outstanding progress and their achievement is excellent in relation to their slightly below average attainment on entry. This is due to high calibre teaching from staff who have high expectations for all pupils. The children in Reception get off to a good start as they learn through a good variety of practical and interesting activities. Their achievement in aspects of their physical development is somewhat hindered by the lack of an outdoor area. Parents of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are very pleased with their children's achievement and their views are borne out by inspection evidence. The school's success also lies in its very accurate assessment procedures and skill in meeting the needs of pupils with different capabilities. Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. They enjoy school, behave extremely well and have very positive attitudes. They are confident and always keen to do their best. Provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good and excellent spiritual development lies at the heart of the school's work. Pupils adopt healthy and safe lifestyles and older pupils make a real contribution to school life by serving on the council and supporting children in Reception at lunch and break. The good curriculum is enriched with many clubs, visits and visitors, which enhances teaching and pupils' enjoyment. Literacy and numeracy feature prominently. However, extending the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to aid pupils' learning is not sufficiently effective. The quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding. The school's pastoral carer responds swiftly to the needs and concerns of pupils. She provides highly effective support and guidance to all, but especially to the school's most vulnerable pupils. There are very good arrangements for guiding pupils on their academic performance and the school's procedures for safeguarding pupils are robust and fully meet current requirements. Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher has an extremely clear, though somewhat modest, view of the school's strengths and wastes no time in identifying where improvements are required. For example, highly successful initiatives to raise pupils' achievement in writing resulted in considerably improved test results in 2006. Outstanding evaluation, coupled with very good improvement since the last inspection, proves that the school has an enormous capacity for continued improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the opportunities for pupils to practise their ICT skills in all subjects. - Make sure the children in Reception experience a full outdoor curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

The changing nature of the school's intake means that attainment on entry is now slightly below the expected level overall. Children in Reception make good progress and achieve well, and standards are close to expected levels on entry to Year 1. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading, and writing, and close to the national average in mathematics. Pupils of all abilities achieve well. By the end of Year 6, assessment data over time shows that pupils reach standards which are well above the national average, especially in science and mathematics. Pupils, including those with learning difficulties, have made very good progress and achieve very well. Across the school, the weaker aspect of attainment has been in how well the more able pupils perform in writing and the school has worked successfully to rectify this anomaly. The school sets challenging targets for all pupils, which are normally met and often exceeded.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is excellent. They behave very well, love school and have excellent relationships with staff and one another. As a result, the school is a happy and caring place in which all pupils achieve exceptionally well and make outstanding progress in acquiring the numeracy, literacy and social skills, which will help in later life. Pupils learn how to stay safe and all say that there are many people they can go to in school if they are unhappy or frightened. They really enjoy the excellent, freshly prepared school meals and know that it is very important to take regular exercise. For example, staff and pupils take part enthusiastically in the early morning aerobics sessions. The school is successful in encouraging pupils to think of others by sponsoring a child in Africa and by supporting several charity collections each year.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Pupils' exceptional achievement is due to the outstanding work of their teachers. Staff have excellent relationships with pupils; as one Year 6 pupil commented: 'Our teachers respect us and we respect them.' All staff have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour and, as a result, classrooms are lively, exciting places where pupils are very

motivated and learn a great deal. A highly competent member of the leadership team, who is an excellent classroom practitioner, together with the headteacher, monitors teaching and sets the high standard for colleagues to emulate. All pupils, and particularly those with learning difficulties, benefit from the very good support provided by the talented teaching assistants. Furthermore, highly effective procedures for tracking pupils' progress underpin lesson planning and give staff the necessary information to precisely match pupils' learning to their abilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school's curriculum is creative and challenging, and provides enjoyment through its variety. It has successfully begun to break down barriers between subjects, such as when it held a 'Magic Moments Day' to make learning more relevant, interesting and exciting for pupils. Art and design has a prominent role in pupils' learning and carefully produced, high standard art displays brighten the walls and corridors. Children in the Foundation Stage get off to a good start with many interesting and exciting activities. However, the lack of an outdoor area restricts certain aspects of the children's learning. Important skills, such as speaking and listening, are given high priority throughout the school to maximise all pupils' learning, although pupils do not use computers enough to support their work. Links with the wider community provide many additional experiences such as visits, visitors and residential experiences that widen pupils' horizons and promote very good learning and outstanding personal development. Clubs, such as athletics and country dancing benefit pupils. As well as adding to their enjoyment of learning, these rich experiences help to develop healthy and varied lifestyles.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Inspectors agree with parents that the school takes outstanding care of all its pupils. There is a highly effective system for monitoring pupils' welfare and staff respond swiftly to support vulnerable pupils. The school has its own pastoral carer who deals sensitively and effectively with pupils' problems. Together with staff and outside agencies, she provides excellent support and guidance for pupils and their families. Guidance to pupils about their academic performance is very good. Pupils know their targets and how to achieve them. Teachers' marking clearly tells pupils what they are doing well and how they can improve their work. There are thorough arrangements for safeguarding pupils and regular training keeps staff up-to-date with current requirements.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding and are key factors in the school's continued success. The headteacher, ably supported by a strong leadership team, has

played a pivotal role in maintaining and improving upon the school's high standards since the last inspection. She knows the school very well and this is reflected in the school's accurate, albeit rather modest self-evaluation, which takes account of the views of staff, governors, parents and pupils. This is a school that shows no sense of complacency and is not content to rest on its laurels. It rigorously and effectively tackles areas requiring improvement, such as in writing, indicating that it has an enormous capacity for further improvement. Morale in the school is high and teamwork is a real strength. For example, all staff play a developing and crucial role in monitoring the school's work and performance. Leadership is further enhanced by the governors of the school who are supportive yet challenging, and play their part in holding the school to account and acting as a critical friend. The school makes effective use of its resources and the different skills of teachers to ensure that the value for money is very good.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	1
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	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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

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

¹ 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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
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	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
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	2
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

5 October 2006 Dear Pupils St Edward's Catholic Primary School, Newhall Road, Swadlincote, Derbyshire, DE11 0BD Thank you so much for making our visit so enjoyable and for taking time to talk to us and to answer our questions. We thought that you would like to hear what we found out about your school. There are many excellent things happening in your school: - - All of you make outstanding progress and reach high standards by the time you leave. - You love school because teachers, teaching assistants, visitors and special events make learning interesting. - You get on very well with one another and your behaviour is excellent. - Your teachers and other adults help you when you have problems, make sure that you are safe and give you very good advice about your work. - Mrs Field is an excellent headteacher and together with all the staff makes sure that you are happy and very successful at school. As you go to such a brilliant school there are only a small number of things that could be even better. We have asked your teachers to give you more chances to use the computers in lessons. Indeed, some of you told us you would like more computers. We also think it would be great if there was an outdoor area for Reception children. It was so good to find that all of you are very happy at school and doing so well and that your parents appreciate and value your school so highly. Keep working hard and enjoying life at St Edward's. We wish you all the very best for the future.
Joyce Cox (Lead inspector)