

# St Godric's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, Durham

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114271
<b>Local Authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	289860
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Denis Goodchild

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	202
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Mark Stephenson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Christine Coxon
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 November 2002
<b>School address</b>	Carrhouse Drive Framwellgate Moor Durham County Durham DH1 5LZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 3847452
<b>Fax number</b>	0191 3864995

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is an average sized primary school on the edge of Durham City. Pupils are drawn from a wide socio-economic range. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. There is a below average proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and of pupils who learn English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average and there are no pupils with statements of special educational needs. Children's skills on entry to the school are typical for their age.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school which parents value highly. The partnership between carers, school and external agencies is very good. This, along with the very effective tracking of pupils' progress, ensures that pupils receive the necessary support so that they can achieve well. Pupils' personal development is outstanding and behaviour is exemplary. This is because of the excellent relationships between teachers and children. Pupils are encouraged to work together and develop caring and considerate relationships through their community work and roles they take as mediators and buddies. A very effective and enriched curriculum strongly promotes the development of literacy, numeracy and study skills and contributes to pupils' enjoyment of school and learning. Pupils develop into articulate, confident individuals who are very well prepared for the future.

Teaching is outstanding and pupils achieve very well. Where children's skills are typical for their age on entry to the school, they are well above by the time they leave school. By the end of Reception, the vast majority of pupils reach the standards expected in all areas of learning. They make very good progress in the development of their personal and social skills because the well organised Foundation Stage strongly promotes personal development. In the end of Year 2 teacher assessments, standards in 2006 were slightly above average in reading, writing and in mathematics, representing satisfactory progress and achievement given this group's starting point on entry to Year 1. However, good improvements have been introduced and pupils now make good progress through Key Stage 1 and achieve well. Pupils currently in Year 2 are working above national expectations.

The pace of teaching and learning accelerates rapidly in Key Stage 2 and school data and inspection evidence show that pupils make excellent progress and are working at levels well above national averages by the time they reach the end of Year 6. In the 2006 tests, results were well above average overall. Pupils with English as an additional language and pupils with learning difficulties achieve as well as other pupils due to very effective support being provided by well briefed teaching assistants.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher provides an excellent lead and is strongly supported by a team who are dedicated to helping every child realise their full potential. All staff and governors play very effective roles in monitoring and evaluating the school's work and so accurately identify areas for development. This, along with proven success in tackling areas of priority, results in excellent capacity for improvement. Given the outcomes for the pupils along with the high quality of provision, the school gives excellent value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- There are no significant areas for improvement.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 1

Pupils' achievement is outstanding. By the time pupils leave school, overall standards are well above average.

Provision in Reception helps pupils make good overall progress and from a broadly average starting point, the vast majority reach the standards expected in all areas of learning. They

make very good progress in the development of their personal and social skills because of the carefully planned organisation of the Foundation Stage curriculum, which promotes and develops collaborative and independent learning.

Pupils continue to make good progress through Key Stage 1 and achieve well. Results in reading, writing and mathematics were slightly above average in the 2006 teacher assessments at the end of Year 2. This represented satisfactory progress through the Key Stage. However, good improvements have taken place and pupils now make good progress through Key Stage 1 and achieve well. Pupils currently in Year 2 are working above national expectations. School initiatives have contributed to raising standards in reading and writing.

In Key Stage 2, the rate of progress accelerates rapidly leading to excellent achievement by the end of Year 6. Over the last five years the results of the national tests at the end of Year 6 have been consistently above, and at times, well above the national average overall. In the 2006 tests, results in English and science were well above average and above in mathematics. Standards in mathematics were not as high as in English because a lower proportion of pupils achieved the higher levels. School data and inspection evidence show that the current Year 6 pupils make excellent progress and are working well above the national averages. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those learning English as an additional language achieve equally well because of the excellent support they receive from well briefed teaching assistants.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Pupils enjoy coming to school and also take full part in the excellent range of before and after school activities. Throughout the school, they show great enthusiasm and enjoyment of learning and this is evident by their good attendance. They are encouraged to, and willingly accept responsibility, as in the work of the school council. For example, councillors negotiated with a contractor the specification for a new chalkboard facility for the playground before reporting back to their class on progress. As a result of such opportunities to take the lead, they develop into very confident and self-assured young people who are very well prepared for the future.

Pupils say they feel happy and safe within school. They are well supported by a 'buddy' system and mediators who help manage behaviour, but they feel confident that there is an adult to turn to if they are troubled. Pupils know how to stay safe and have a very good understanding of how to stay healthy. They can explain the benefits of healthy eating and exercise.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they have excellent relationships with one another and with adults. They show respect and consideration for others when working collaboratively. The very strong links with the church, their partnerships with overseas schools and also their environmental work promote a very good understanding of other cultures and a concern for the environment. Pupils respond very well when contributing to community events and they have an outstanding record of supporting good causes. For example, their contribution to a gymnastics festival is helping to raise funds for a national cancer charity and they are regularly involved in fundraising for the Catholic charity CAFOD.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and lessons are typically stimulating, innovative and promote enjoyment of learning. A range of different teaching and learning styles and resources are employed, which develop thinking skills and actively seek to engage the pupils. Teachers have very high expectations and behaviour is exemplary so no time is wasted. Pupils work very hard and respond very well to the challenging lessons. Clear explanations and demonstrations ensure that pupils have the necessary skills and knowledge to work independently. This enables pupils to make rapid progress in their learning. Skilful questioning by teachers encourages pupils to clarify and explain their answers, which help to deepen their knowledge and pupils' appreciation that they can learn from their mistakes. Relationships are excellent. Pupils, therefore, feel confident that they will be listened to. There is a high quality dialogue between teachers and pupils that supports learning very well. Teachers know their pupils well and provide them with excellent feedback on how to improve. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those learning English as an additional language, receive highly effective support from well briefed teaching assistants and, therefore, make as good progress as other pupils.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 1

An outstanding curriculum motivates pupils and promotes enjoyment of learning. A very strong focus on the basic skills provides a firm foundation for the high standards attained by the end of Year 6. The school is particularly successful in adapting the curriculum so that all pupils are appropriately challenged. For example, more able Year 6 pupils were working from the Year 7 programme and solving problems based on the mean values of numbers whilst lower attaining pupils solved problems based on estimation and multiplication. Both groups made very good progress relative to their prior attainment. Starting in Reception, the school is very successful in promoting the pupils' personal development, which firmly underpins the progress they make in their academic studies. A programme on 'thinking skills' provides pupils with strategies that support learning and ensures that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education

All subjects of the National Curriculum are covered well and, in addition, pupils have the opportunity to learn Italian and French. Curriculum enrichment is outstanding. Visits, visitors, a residential week, links with outside agencies and before and after school clubs cover an extensive range of interests. Lessons are enhanced by these activities, which capture pupils' interest and add enrichment and enjoyment to learning. A very strong emphasis on healthy eating and exercise enables pupils to make well-informed personal lifestyle choices. Success in curriculum provision has been recognised in awards such as Basic Skills and physical education ActiveMark Gold.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support of learners are outstanding. Relationships between learners and the staff are excellent and contribute to a positive learning environment in which every child feels valued. The reward system that leads to a 'star pupil' lunch celebrates exceptional

achievement and provides a real incentive for pupils to do well. The school has very good links with other carers and agencies and provides excellent support for all pupils including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who learn English as an additional language. There is systematic attention given to checking pupils' progress and this ensures that pupils receive the appropriate help and are also given excellent guidance on how to improve. This contributes significantly to pupils' achievement and personal development. Child protection, health and safety procedures are rigorously implemented. Parents confirm that they are reassured by the school's robust approach to premises and Internet security and risk assessments for educational visits.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

Leadership and management are outstanding. The excellent leadership of the headteacher provides a clear vision and direction to school improvement. In this, she receives very good support from the school community, which is committed to meet the needs of all pupils and to provide a safe, secure learning environment in which all can achieve their full potential. Management has established a rich and varied curriculum that strongly promotes personal development and this, combined with challenging targets, leads to high academic achievement by the end of Year 6.

Rigorous and efficient systems are in place that track pupils' performance and help management to identify those pupils who need additional support. The senior management has been restructured and thoroughly evaluates school performance and accurately identifies appropriate areas for improvement. For example, recent initiatives in English are helping to raise standards in reading and writing in Key Stage 1 and a continued focus on thinking skills contributes towards creative teaching and learning. Also, a detailed analysis of pupils' performance in the different strands of mathematics has helped focus teaching and contributed towards raising standards further in this subject.

Parents and governors are full of praise for the hard work of the headteacher and staff. The governors support the headteacher very effectively. They monitor the work of the school, have a very good understanding of the school's performance and contribute to strategic planning. Since the previous inspection, excellent financial management has resulted in very good improvement in the school building and resources in information and communication technology.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<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>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<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	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

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

6 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Godric's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, Durham, DH1 5LZ

Mr Sleightholme and I had a lovely time when we visited your school. Thank you for making us feel so welcome and we enjoyed watching you work so hard in your lessons.

You tell us that you really enjoy coming to school and that your school is special. We agree. We think your school is outstanding and would like to share with you some of the reasons why. Your teachers work very hard to produce interesting lessons and make learning fun. Best of all, they give you some very good ideas and ways to help you in your learning. You and your teachers get on very well together. This means you listen carefully and follow their advice when they tell you how to improve your work. So, you learn quickly and you achieve some very good results. Not only are lessons fun but the school also provides many other activities outside the classroom which makes coming to school so enjoyable.

The adults in the school work very hard at making the school a very safe place to be and your parents agree with this. You also do a very good job of looking after each other and caring for the school. We were very impressed at how well you all behave. The school council, buddies and mediators play a big part in helping the school to improve; we could see that everyone had a part to play in making the school run smoothly. I know that you will continue to work hard and help your headteacher and teachers to keep St Godric's Primary such an outstanding school.

Best wishes

Denis Goodchild

Lead inspector