



St Augustine's Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 125713
Local Authority Warwickshire
Inspection number 293340
Inspection date 28 November 2006
Reporting inspector Alison Grainger

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Hollis Lane
School category	Voluntary aided		Kenilworth
Age range of pupils	4-11		CV8 2JY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01926 852943
Number on roll (school)	207	Fax number	01926 857073
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Joan Ryan
		Headteacher	Angela Scull
Date of previous school inspection	30 April 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This average-sized primary school is situated on the northern edge of Kenilworth. Most pupils are White British and a few are from other ethnic backgrounds. No pupil is at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average. Most children enter the Reception Year with attainment at least at the level expected for their age.

The school has been through an unsettled period in its leadership and management recently. There were three acting headteachers during the last school year and also some other changes of staff. The present headteacher took up her post in September 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school that prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education. At the heart of the school's success lies effective teamwork. Staff have worked well together, with the support of governors, to take the school through its recent unsettled period.

Leadership and management are good. The new headteacher has quickly gained the confidence of staff and parents. She and other teachers who have significant responsibilities are clear about what the school needs to do next to become even more effective. Self-evaluation is thorough and accurate. As a result, this already good school is moving onwards and upwards.

By the time pupils reach the end of Year 6, standards are significantly above the national average. Pupils' achievement is good. At each stage, from entry to the Reception Year through to the end of Year 6, they make good progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Nevertheless, the school is continually seeking to improve pupils' progress. It has rightly identified that some more capable girls do not do as well as they should in mathematics.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Almost all pupils enjoy school a lot and their behaviour is exceptionally good. Pupils form positive relationships, show a good awareness of the needs of others, and contribute well to the school and wider community. They do much to raise funds for charities and play a strong part in parish activities. Pupils also have a secure knowledge of how to look after themselves, such as by keeping fit and eating healthily. Although the school prepares pupils well for their future lives, their understanding of the diversity of modern multi-ethnic society is a weaker aspect of their personal development.

The staff's strong teamwork and commitment to meeting pupils' needs results in teaching and the curriculum being good. Effective teaching is the main reason for pupils' good academic progress. The curriculum does much to support pupils' personal development as well as their academic progress.

Care, guidance and support are good. A strong feature of the school's work is the sensitive care provided for individuals with particular learning or medical needs. Effective support for pupils' personal welfare results in them feeling safe and secure at school. There are examples of good academic guidance, but the use of marking and individual targets does not consistently help pupils to take the level of responsibility for their learning of which many are capable. The school has started to take action to improve the academic guidance.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all pupils, particularly the more capable girls, do as well as they should in mathematics.
- Develop the use of marking and individual targets in helping pupils to take responsibility for their learning.

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to gain understanding of the rich diversity of modern multi-ethnic society.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are significantly above average by the end of Year 6. In 2006, they were exceptionally high in science. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress and achieve well.

Children get off to a strong start in the Reception Year. They build well on the areas of greatest strength in their attainment on entry, such as their good speaking and listening skills and their knowledge and understanding of the world. Significant steps forward are also made in areas in which they are not quite as secure when they start school, such as early writing skills and knowledge of letter sounds.

By the end of Year 2, standards are significantly above average in reading, writing and mathematics. High standards are maintained well in the later years. Although progress is good overall in mathematics, the school has correctly identified that some of the more capable girls do not move on as well as they should.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are mature, sensible and friendly young people. They move safely about the school and know why they should handle equipment safely in lessons such as design and technology. Behaviour is of a consistently high standard. Pupils are keen, eager to learn and pay good attention to their teachers. They also respect the contributions of their classmates, such as when pupils in Year 6 present topics they have researched. Pupils enjoy school a lot and attendance is above the national average.

Pupils do a tremendous amount to raise funds for a wide range of charities. They speak with enthusiasm of events such as a recent 'pyjama day' to raise money for Children in Need. They make a positive contribution to the school community by conscientiously carrying out responsibilities in their classrooms and, for example, as house captains and librarians when they reach Year 6.

Pupils' good moral, social and spiritual development is clearly evident in how they conduct themselves. Although pupils are introduced to world faiths and learn about life in other countries, they do not develop enough understanding of the wide range of backgrounds and cultural traditions of people living in Britain today.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good teaching is the main reason for pupils making good progress. Teachers have high expectations of the standards that all pupils are capable of attaining and also of their attitudes and behaviour. As a result, lessons are conducted in a calm and productive atmosphere and learning moves on at a good pace. Clear explanations and instructions based on teachers' secure subject knowledge also promote effective learning. The purpose of each lesson is explained clearly so that pupils know what they are aiming to achieve. Teaching assistants give good support to pupils with learning difficulties.

Just occasionally, in whole-class sessions, teaching is pitched at the same level for all pupils and is not finely enough tuned to their differing needs. This sometimes occurs, for example, when the teacher provides pupils with factual information. There are also a few missed opportunities to draw on pupils' ideas and, for example, to engage them actively in discussion.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum helps pupils to make good progress academically and also contributes much to their personal development. Particularly good attention is given to English, mathematics and science. Some good measures have been introduced to help to ensure that all pupils do well enough in mathematics. For example, stories with a mathematical content are being used well to enliven mathematics topics for younger pupils.

Clubs, visits, visitors and weeks with a specific focus enrich lessons well. These opportunities add much to pupils' enjoyment of school. Good opportunities also help pupils to succeed in the arts. Good attention is given to each area of learning in the Reception Year. The school is rightly developing the outdoor learning opportunities for these young children to match the quality of those provided indoors.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Effective attention to pupils' personal welfare ensures that they feel safe at school and are able to discuss issues concerning school life with adults. The School Council gives pupils a good voice in the school. Pupils are proud, for example, that they were involved in making the school meals healthier. A particularly good feature is the care for individual pupils with medical needs. Sensitive support is also provided for pupils with learning difficulties.

There are examples of good academic guidance. Individual targets are used well in Year 2 and pupils speak confidently about how these help their learning. Marking in Years 5 and 6 tells pupils clearly what they are doing well and how they could improve their work. There is some inconsistency which the school has recognised in how well

marking and individual targets are used to help pupils take responsibility for their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good teamwork brought the school through an unsettled period, ensuring the minimum of disruption for pupils. The staff worked well with each of the acting headteachers who led the school last year. Governors have also done much to support the school through the recent uncertain times. They have shown determination in their search for a new headteacher and are continuing to help move the school forward.

The new headteacher has quickly evaluated the school's effectiveness. She provides a clear educational direction with strong support from other staff with significant responsibilities, such as those who coordinate the work in English, mathematics and science. The roles of staff responsible for other subjects have developed satisfactorily since the last inspection. The school is now putting the right systems in place to involve these subject coordinators even more in evaluating provision and raising standards.

Even though the recent past has been unsettled, the school has made good progress since its last inspection. Strong teamwork, together with the headteacher's clear direction for improvement, gives the school good capacity to develop even further.

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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
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?	2

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?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
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	2
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

Thank you for helping me when I visited your school. I enjoyed talking with you and finding out about your school. The School Council told me a lot about your views of school. I agree with you that St Augustine's is a good school.

You are sensible young people who get on well with each other. Your behaviour is excellent. I am pleased that you enjoy school. I am impressed by how well you care for other people and particularly by how much you do to raise funds for charities. I saw all the shoeboxes waiting to go off to Romania. The school council told me about your 'Pyjama Day' to raise funds for Children in Need. I am glad that you really enjoyed that.

You are making good progress with your school work. The youngest children get off to a good start in the Reception Year. This is built on well as you move up through the school. By the time you reach the end of Year 6, standards are significantly above the national average. I have asked your school to make sure that you all do as well as you should in mathematics. Your teachers have been right to identify that some of you could make better progress in mathematics and have already started to do more to help you.

The reason why you make good progress is that the teaching is good. You also have lots of interesting activities additional to your lessons, such as clubs, visits, visitors and focus weeks. I have asked your school to help you to learn more about the many people from different backgrounds living in Britain today. This should be interesting and will help to prepare you for all the people you may meet as you grow older.

The adults look after you well. The School Council told me that you appreciate this and find the adults approachable. I have asked the teachers to develop their marking and the targets they set to help you take more responsibility for your learning.

Thank you once again for your help. Keep doing your best and working with the adults to make St Augustine's even better.