

# St John Bosco RC Junior and Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103991
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sandwell
<b>Inspection number</b>	323939
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 April 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alison Grainger

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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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 (total)	241
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Burke
<b>Headteacher</b>	Edward Masterson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 June 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Monmouth Drive West Bromwich B71 2ST
<b>Telephone number</b>	01215 560228
<b>Fax number</b>	01215 560228

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

In this average size school, most pupils are White British. The proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds is increasing and currently stands at just over a third of pupils. In particular, the number of Polish pupils is growing and many of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English when they join the school. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties or problems with speech, language and communication. There have been several changes of headteacher in recent years. The present headteacher took over responsibility for the school in January 2009. The deputy headteacher was acting headteacher for two terms prior to this.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. It is improving and already has some good features. Good care, guidance and support, underpinned by the school's Catholic ethos, result in the good personal development and well-being of pupils. As one parent observed, 'The school ethos is very good as it teaches children to respect themselves as well as others.' Another pointed out that, 'The general attitude of the staff at this school is loving and considerate.'

Pupils behave well, have positive attitudes to learning and get on well with each other and with the adults in school. As a result, the school is a calm environment. Pupils feel safe and say that they are sure that they have an adult to whom they can turn should the need arise. Pupils know a good deal about how to keep fit and healthy through diet and exercise. They make a satisfactory contribution to the school and wider community, such as by raising funds for charities.

All in all, pupils greatly enjoy school and most attend regularly. However, the attendance rate is below average and has fallen over the last two years. This dip in attendance results largely from an increasing number of pupils being taken out of school for extended holidays to visit families overseas. The school is not sufficiently proactive in working with parents and community representatives to promote good attendance.

Overall, standards are below average. Pupils make satisfactory progress over their time in the school from starting points that are generally below the level expected. For many children, skills in communication, language and literacy are a particular weakness on entry to the Nursery. Children's progress by the end of the Reception Year is satisfactory. It is no better than this because not all teaching and activities are closely enough matched to children's learning needs, particularly in Reception. While the outdoor environment for children in Nursery and Reception has improved since the last inspection, learning through outdoor activities remains an area requiring further development.

In many year groups across the school, speaking, listening, reading and writing skills are the weaker features in pupils' attainment. The school has introduced initiatives to tackle this and these are starting to raise standards. Nevertheless, senior leaders recognise that further action is necessary. The school has also rightly identified that more able pupils are not always challenged enough.

Pupils' progress is satisfactory because teaching is satisfactory. The amount of good teaching is increasing, particularly in Years 3 to 6 where pupils' progress speeds up. Instances of outstanding teaching are found in Year 6. The curriculum is satisfactory, with good features in the activities provided in addition to daily lessons, such as visits and clubs, including sports. An underdeveloped area of the curriculum is information and communication technology (ICT). The school has insufficient resources for ICT which means that pupils do not have enough opportunities to routinely use and develop their skills in using new technology in different subjects.

Although there have been recent changes at a senior level, leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has accurately identified its strengths and weaknesses. There is a strong commitment from senior staff and teachers to raising standards. Improvements already showing as a result of initiatives in the teaching of phonic skills and writing, together with steadily improving teaching, show that the school has the necessary capacity to move forward.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

There is variation in how well children progress in the Nursery and Reception Year. In the Nursery, steady progress is made. In the Reception Year, children's knowledge, understanding and skills are developed at a slower pace. As a result, standards are still below average when children transfer to Year 1.

In the Nursery, staff are usually responsive to children's learning needs. A strong feature is the promotion of early writing. The teacher continually evaluates how well each child is developing in this area and takes effective action to promote the next steps in learning. In order to develop their communication skills, children are encouraged to speak in simple sentences, rather than giving one-word answers to questions. Occasionally, however, there are missed opportunities to target questions to individual children in question and answer sessions. There is a good balance of activities led by adults and those that children select for themselves. In Reception, the use of assessment to match activities to individual learning needs is less effective. Opportunities for outdoor learning are developing, particularly in the Nursery. This aspect of provision is more limited in Reception, particularly in the scope for children to move freely outdoors, to learn through play, and to initiate activities.

Children's personal development is promoted well in the Nursery. Good attitudes and behaviour are maintained in Reception, although children's independence and initiative are developed too slowly. Attention to children's welfare is satisfactory, with good features such as in the risk assessments for visits. The school has accurately identified the areas of provision requiring improvement, and action taken is already resulting in good developments in the Nursery.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve opportunities for outdoor learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage and ensure that teaching and activities in Reception are always closely matched to children's needs.
- Raise standards in speaking, listening, reading and writing across the school and ensure that the more able pupils are challenged fully.
- Improve resources for ICT and the opportunities for pupils to use and develop their skills in this area as a routine part of their work across the curriculum.
- Work closely with parents and community representatives to improve attendance.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Standards are a little below average across the school. In the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2008, the percentage of pupils reaching the level expected for their age was broadly average. However, overall standards were below average because a lower proportion than is found nationally attained the higher level. Although satisfactory progress is made, skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing remain relative weaknesses in many year groups. Pupils gain reasonable competence in ICT but have too few opportunities to use and develop their skills across the curriculum. Overall, progress speeds up during pupils' later years in the school.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities progress satisfactorily, as do those new to learning English.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The spiritual, moral and social aspects of pupils' personal development are good. The outcomes of this are seen in pupils' high levels of consideration for others and in their good attitudes and behaviour. Cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils gain a sound understanding of world faiths and the school is racially harmonious. Pupils take pride in their school. The school council helps to ensure that pupils' views matter and has, for example, contributed to improvements to the playground. Pupils' enthusiasm for physical exercise and healthy lifestyles is evident in their enjoyment of the new adventure playground. They are knowledgeable about what constitutes a good diet and the importance of having lots of fruit and vegetables.

The falling attendance rate is a concern, even though a smaller proportion of pupils than is found nationally are persistent absentees. Although pupils develop many good personal attributes, their basic skills and competence in ICT prepare them only satisfactorily for their future lives.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Although teaching and learning are only satisfactory, there are good features in almost all classes and an increasing amount of good teaching. Where teaching is good, teachers have secure subject knowledge and make effective use of interactive whiteboards. A good balance of activities such as group and whole-class work keep pupils involved well, particularly in well-paced lessons. Almost all lessons are well organised. There is variation, however, in how well teaching assistants are used to support learning in different classes and parts of lessons. Sometimes, for example, teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to group work but are not effectively deployed when the class is taught as a whole. Teaching during whole-class sessions is sometimes at the same level for all. When this happens in Years 3 to 6, it is usually the more capable pupils that are not challenged enough. In some lessons for younger pupils, both the lower attaining and more capable pupils' needs are not met fully.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The range of the curriculum has improved since the last inspection, with a balanced approach to the coverage of subjects. There is acceptable provision for ICT in specific ICT lessons and through use of facilities in a local secondary school. However, the low number of computers in the school and the lack of frequent opportunities to use ICT skills in other subjects limit the scope for pupils to develop their skills. The school has rightly identified that pupils' skills learnt in English lessons require more reinforcement across the curriculum in order to raise standards. Pupils are benefiting from increased opportunities for writing at length and from focused phonics teaching.

A good range of activities, including visits and clubs, enhances day-by-day lessons. A residential visit for older pupils contributes much to their spiritual development as well as providing opportunities for outdoor and adventurous activities.

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

#### **Grade: 2**

The pastoral care and attention to pupils' well-being contributes hugely to their personal development. Adults provide good examples in how they relate to others and provide a supportive and nurturing environment for pupils. Pupils new to the school are welcomed and settle well as a result. There is sensitive support for pupils at an early stage of learning English. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are given sound assistance. A high priority is given to ensuring that pupils are safeguarded. Comprehensive procedures are in place for child protection. The school is keenly aware of its responsibilities to pupils who are vulnerable. However, it is not doing enough to ensure that all groups of pupils have good attendance. Guidance to pupils on how to improve their work is sound. There are some particularly good examples of marking helping pupils to do better in Years 3 to 6.

### **Leadership and management**

#### **Grade: 3**

After a period of unsettled leadership, the new headteacher is providing a clear direction for improvement. As a result, the pace of development is starting to pick up. The deputy headteacher gives good support and makes a substantial contribution to the school. The staff team has also helped the school through unsettled times. Subject leadership is satisfactory. The English and ICT subject leaders, for example, are clear about the developments now needed to move their subjects forward. Governance is satisfactory, although governors are better at supporting than providing constructive challenge. Community cohesion is promoted satisfactorily as seen, for example, in the welcome given to the increasing number of Polish pupils and their families. The headteacher recognises, however, that the school has some way to go to become more proactive in working with the wider community.

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## Annex A

**Inspection judgements**

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<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>	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

**Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?</b>	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	3
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	3
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

**Achievement and standards**

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

30 April 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St John Bosco Catholic Primary School, West Bromwich B71 2ST

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you, watching your lessons and looking at your work. We found that your school provides you with a satisfactory education.

Your personal development is good. You behave well, have good attitudes to learning and get on well with each other and with the adults in school. You are welcoming to new children and help them to settle in. You know a lot about how to keep fit and healthy. You told us that the adults look after you well and that you feel safe at school. You are lucky to have some good activities in addition to your daily lessons, including visits and sports. The new adventure playground seems a lot of fun.

We have asked the adults to do these things in particular now.

- Make sure that your learning needs are always met in the Nursery and in Reception and give you more opportunities to play and learn outdoors.
- Help all of you to do better in speaking, listening, reading and writing and give more challenge to those of you who learn quickly.
- Improve the resources for ICT and the opportunities you have to use and develop ICT skills in different subjects.
- Work with your parents and other people in the community to help you all to have good attendance.

You can help by continuing to be pleasant young people, by working hard and by making sure that your attendance is good.

Yours sincerely

Alison Grainger

Lead inspector