

Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, Newhouse

Inspection report

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 114269 |
| Local Authority | Durham |
| Inspection number | 325979 |
| Inspection date | 2 April 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Derek Sleightholme |

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.

| | |
|--|--|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 93 |
| 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 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr Jack Boyle |
| Headteacher | Miss Erica Smith |
| Date of previous school inspection | 5 April 2006 |
| Date of previous funded early education inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Date of previous childcare inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | Durham Road Esh Winning Durham County Durham DH7 9PA |
| Telephone number | 0191 3734343 |
| Fax number | 0191 3734343 |

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| Age group | 4–11 |
| Inspection date | 2 April 2009 |
| Inspection number | 325979 |

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the effectiveness of actions taken to challenge more able pupils
- the impact of teaching on achievement
- the effectiveness of leaders in promoting community cohesion.

Evidence was gathered from observations of lessons, analyses of pupils' work, performance data, parents' questionnaires and the school's documentation, and from discussions with pupils, staff and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a small primary school. The pupil roll has risen as a result of the closure of another local school and parental choice. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is average. The number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. Almost all pupils are White British. None are at an early stage of acquiring English. The pupils are educated in 4 classes. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision is a Reception class that also includes some Year 1 pupils. The school has achieved the Artsmark Gold status.

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. It has several outstanding features. Pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. The curriculum and the care, guidance and support provided are outstanding. 'This is a fantastic school which cares for the whole child' is a written comment that typifies most parents' positive views of the school.

Achievement is good. Small numbers of pupils in each year group lead to some variation in standards year on year. Pupils enter Year 1 with below average attainment. They make good progress and in recent years assessments have been average at the end of Year 2. Current standards in Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics are average. These pupils are achieving well given their starting points. Pupils continue to make good progress by Year 6. The results of the 2008 Year 6 national tests were exceptionally high in English and mathematics and above average in science. These pupils achieved well from higher starting points. Current standards in Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics and science. These pupils are achieving well given they were average at the end of Year 2. Pupils make rapid progress in speaking and listening. Leaders recognise progress in writing is slower and are implementing a plan to improve this key skill. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from the sensitive intervention of skilled assistants and make good progress.

Pupils love coming to school. Attendance is above average and behaviour exemplary. Pupils become polite, well mannered, responsible and reflective. Some join the junior 'Justice and Peace' group where they are active in supporting others less fortunate than themselves, for example, pupils have raised funds for a well in Tanzania. Pupils value exercise highly. Some are currently compiling a cookbook with 'green' visual prompts to healthy foods and 'red' alerts where caution is recommended. They feel very safe at school because they trust adults who support them personally; they rapidly and sensibly left the premises when the fire alarm sounded during the inspection. Pupils make a first-rate contribution to church calendar events, their school, and the local and wider communities. School councillors conveyed pupils' wishes for better playground facilities. Pupils enthusiastically attend the diverse range of extra-curricular clubs; all Year 6 pupils attended booster sessions. With their good achievement in basic skills and enterprising initiatives, pupils are well prepared for the future.

Teaching and learning are good. This promotes good progress. Subject content is delivered confidently, relationships are excellent and pupils are managed well. Occasionally teaching is outstanding and inspires in pupils a desire to reach higher goals. Pupils' mature responses in literacy and rapid mental calculation in numeracy demonstrate the success of leadership in raising attainment, particularly in challenging more able pupils. Occasionally, teaching lacks sparkle, the pace slows and there is less time for pupils to be actively involved. The school provides an outstanding range of curriculum experiences that make an important contribution to pupils' outstanding personal development. Skilful planning of topics links learning between subjects very effectively. Leaders have also spotted opportunities to promote key skills throughout the school day. An exemplary feature is the provision of 'Talking Lunch' days when pupils sit with an adult who promotes conversation at each dining table. The range of learning experiences is extended through a family learning programme and excellent sports and creative partnerships. Through a university link pupils are experiencing innovative 'touch screen' interactive learning facilities. Child protection, safeguarding and risk assessments meet requirements. The school has gained a good reputation for its provision for pupils with learning

difficulties and/or disabilities. A parent describing provision wrote, 'I cannot praise the school enough for the amount of help and support they give. Their patience is unending'. Academic guidance is excellent. Feedback to pupils is regular and helpful. Pupils know their targets. These are changed regularly and provide good challenge.

Leadership, management and governance are good. The headteacher, who provides dedicated leadership, is supported by a small but effective staff team. Important outcomes of their good collaboration are the success in raising standards, the outstanding personal development of pupils and improving the curriculum. The school has good capacity to improve further. Governors challenge leaders well and contribute to good monitoring. This leads to accurate self-evaluation and relevant priorities. Leaders, who promote community cohesion well, have carefully evaluated the contextual setting of the school. They are successfully strengthening pupils' understanding of diversity in Britain through links with an inner city parish. The international dimension is promoted through partnership with a French school.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision is good. Children begin in Reception from low starting points. Although there is some variation on entry year on year, children are regularly admitted with particularly weak speech and language skills, restricted social and number skills and limited knowledge. Children's personal development is good and they grow in confidence. Children make friends quickly, follow instructions and behave well. They contribute to classroom routines by tidying up equipment. Children speak confidently to adults because they trust them. Good teaching ensures pupils make good progress in all areas of learning especially gains in speaking, listening and social skills. Despite the good progress, most do not reach the expected goals by the end of Reception. Children enter Year 1 with below average standards.

Learning and development are good. Adult-led activities are suitable balanced with opportunities for children to learn independently. An engaging adult-led phonics activity helped children to learn and blend the sounds of letters to make simple words. Later children used the interactive board independently to 'sort' mini beasts by characteristics such as 'has wings' and 'no legs'. Outdoor learning facilities have improved especially those for promoting physical development. Although children make clear gains outdoors, especially during adult-led activities, there is a lack of resources to trigger children's interest and enquiry. Welfare is excellent. Daily routines are diligently implemented. Assessment of progress is regular and includes photographic evidence to back judgements. Leadership is good. There is a positive sense of direction and collaboration is promoted effectively.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the consistency of pace and pupil engagement in lessons.
- Increase resources to stimulate exploration, investigation and independence in the outdoor area of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

| | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
|--|-----------------------|

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 |
| 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? | 1 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 2 |

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|---|---|
| How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS? | 2 |
| How well do children in the EYFS achieve? | 2 |
| How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS? | 2 |
| How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop? | 2 |
| How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted? | 1 |
| How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed? | 2 |

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/or disabilities make progress | 2 |

¹Grade 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

| | |
|---|---|
| How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 1 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 1 |
| The extent to which learners enjoy their education | 1 |
| The attendance of learners | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners | 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 | 2 |

The quality of provision

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

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 2 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated | 2 |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion? | 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

3 April 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School,
Newhouse, Durham, DH7 9PA

Thank you for helping us when we inspected your school. You were friendly and helpful. We enjoyed visiting your classrooms, looking at your work on display and in your books and talking to you about your school.

You attend a good school. It is a happy and smiley place to be. Your behaviour is outstanding and your attendance is good. You show much enthusiasm for sport and possess very good knowledge of healthy lifestyles and why it is important to be healthy and stay fit. Good luck with your new cookbook! You feel very safe at school and know how to get help. The school takes excellent care of you. You make a strong contribution to school and work really hard to raise funds to help others who you realise are less fortunate.

You are provided with an excellent curriculum. It helps you develop personally and academically. By Year 6, you reach above average standards. Teaching is good and helps you to make good progress overall. Your high quality art on display has helped the school get the gold Artsmark. Well done!

There are two things the school could do better.

- Ensure lessons are lively, keep you interested and give you enough time to be actively involved.
- Improve the quality of outdoor learning activities for Reception children.

We wish you and all the staff the very best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Derek Sleightholme and Ruth Packwood

Inspectors