

St Vincent's RC Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 108514 |
| Local Authority | Newcastle Upon Tyne |
| Inspection number | 356377 |
| Inspection dates | 21–22 September 2010 |
| Reporting inspector | Carol Gater |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 204 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mrs Clare Emmerson |
| Headteacher | Sr Mary Josepha |
| Date of previous school inspection | 10 October 2007 |
| School address | Monkchester Road Walker Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE6 2TX |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 12 lessons, observed eight teachers and looked at pupils' work. Meetings were held with staff, pupils and governors and 51 questionnaires from parents and carers were analysed.

Questionnaires from pupils and staff were also taken into account. The team looked at a range of documentation, including the school's development plan, safeguarding procedures and assessment data.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following;

- Pupils' current attainment and progress, particularly in mathematics.
- The way that teachers use assessment information to plan to meet pupils' individual needs.
- The effect of the leadership team in driving and sustaining the improvements that have been made.

Information about the school

St. Vincent's is an average sized primary school. A high proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals and the number with special needs and/or disabilities is well above average. A few pupils are from minority ethnic groups and speak English as an additional language.

The school has the Healthy Schools status and runs a daily breakfast club.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

St. Vincent's is a satisfactory school. It has strengths in the good care it provides for all its pupils. The school has come through a difficult period, dealing positively with staffing and building reorganisation. Issues from the last inspection have been addressed and the new outdoor provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is being used well to reinforce the teaching of basic skills. Morale is high and staff relish being part of a team committed to raising pupils' attainment and progress. The new leadership team has worked effectively to drive the school forward and rapid improvements have been made. Attainment is now broadly average, with particular improvement in writing. Current data show that attainment in mathematics, although close to average, is not as strong as in English. Progress overall, is satisfactory.

Teachers know their pupils well and good relationships promote a positive learning environment. Where teaching is good or better, teachers effectively use assessment information to plan interesting activities to meet the needs of all pupils. This is not yet consistent across the school, particularly in mathematics. Not all pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve their work.

A key strength of the school is the high-quality care that staff provide for all pupils, including those who are vulnerable. This support extends to families. Parents and carers overwhelmingly echo pupils' feelings that the school keeps them safe. Initiatives, such as the 'ABC' project, enable pupils to understand, assess and cope with a range of risks. The breakfast club is well attended and provides opportunities for pupils to develop good social skills. Intervention programmes have been successful in improving pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Pupils make a good contribution to the community. They show compassion and understanding for others who are less fortunate than themselves, for example, by fundraising for projects in Peru and Tanzania. Pupils enjoy school. They behave well in class but some pupils feel that behaviour at lunch time is not always good. The development of the playground and purchase of new resources are planned to help address this.

The school has an accurate picture of its strengths and weaknesses. It is working in partnership with the local authority to ensure that future challenging targets are met. Systems to track pupils' progress are in place but the information is not yet used effectively to ensure that all pupils make as much progress as possible. Current outcomes are satisfactory and as such the school provides sound value for money. Capacity for further sustained improvement is satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Raise pupils' attainment and increase the rate of progress, particularly in mathematics, by ensuring that:
 - teachers use assessment information more effectively to match activities closely to the needs of individuals
 - pupils are aware of the next steps in their learning
 - the leadership team closely monitors tracking data so that all pupils make as much progress as possible.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils enjoy their lessons and, where activities are practical and lively, they work enthusiastically and purposefully. They are well motivated and have good attitudes to learning because of the successful relationships they have with their teachers.

Children's overall attainment on entry to the school is well below that typical for this age. Although the end of Key Stage 2 test results have been below average in recent years, they are rising and current data and inspection evidence confirm that attainment is now broadly average. Progress is satisfactory and improving. Writing shows most improvement because of the school's focused actions to support individuals and groups of pupils. Extra challenge for the more-able pupils in lessons has also resulted in an increased number of pupils reaching the higher levels in both English and mathematics. As a result of targeted support, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. Some, including those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress.

In pupils' personal development there are strengths in the contribution they make to the community. They are willing to take on roles of responsibility in school, such as being school councillors and buddies, and they are proud of their achievements. They have also worked with pupils from other schools on local regeneration projects. They cooperate well in groups and take their roles as 'Intelligent Friends' seriously, listening to each other's ideas. Some act as 'ambassadors' and confidently welcome visitors to their classrooms. They have a satisfactory understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles; a number cycle to school and others take part in after-school activities. Pupils respond positively to the school's inclusive ethos and work well together, regardless of their different backgrounds. This contributes to their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance is broadly average and pupils are soundly prepared for the future.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 3 |
| Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹ | 3 |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 3 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress | 3 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 2 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 3 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 3 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 3 |
| Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹ | 3 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |

How effective is the provision?

Lessons are well-planned and practical activities, such as drama, engage pupils and encourage the development of their speaking and listening skills. Pupils are industrious and respond well to their teachers' constructive praise. Relationships are good and pupils work productively in groups, sometimes assuming the roles of secretaries and reporters. Teachers' clear explanations ensure that pupils understand what is expected of them. In lessons where teaching is good, assessment information is effectively used to plan future work that accelerates progress. This is not yet consistent across all year groups and subjects, and teachers do not routinely tell pupils what they need to do to improve and how to do so. Teaching assistants are well informed and deployed effectively to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully involved in lessons.

The curriculum focuses appropriately on the improvement of basic skills and implemented strategies have been effective in improving pupils' writing. There are examples of good cross-curricular work, which include the use of information and communication technology. Curriculum plans outline further links between subjects and promote the development of basic skills. The impact of this can be seen more clearly in English than in mathematics. A wide range of educational visits has been planned to enhance learning. Strong links with local services, such as the police, contribute well to pupils' personal development.

Good quality care and safeguarding procedures contribute well to pupils feeling safe and secure. They are confident that teachers listen to them and are on hand to resolve any problems that they may have. The school works sensitively and effectively with

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numerous outside agencies to support vulnerable pupils and their families. There are some examples of individual pupils overcoming significant barriers to make good progress in their academic and personal development. Attendance is in line with the national average and continues to improve because of the good monitoring systems that are in place. The headteacher has an extensive knowledge of families and works closely with them on support programmes and the Parent Support Advisor's work has been effective in engaging parents and carers in their children's learning. The school has good arrangements for the transfer of pupils at different stages of their education.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 3 |
| Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 3 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 3 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 2 |

How effective are leadership and management?

The relatively new leadership team has an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas to develop. Their energy and enthusiasm underpin a concerted drive to improve provision. The deputy headteacher has worked extensively with staff to improve teaching and this is beginning to impact on attainment and progress. Partnerships with the local authority have resulted in good professional development and the impact of this is clear in pupils' writing. Evaluation is more rigorous and resulting in more sharply focused action plans. Currently, the tracking of pupils' progress is not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that the good progress in English continues and that standards are raised in mathematics. This is an inclusive school that welcomes all, promotes tolerance and respect and has effective procedures for tackling any form of discrimination. However, the pupil tracking system does not always ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they can.

The governing body provides satisfactory leadership. Governors are supportive and understand the challenges the school faces. They ensure that safeguarding procedures are good. The school site is very secure. Child protection training is given a high priority and the school works closely and effectively with external agencies to support pupils' welfare. The school's contribution to community cohesion is satisfactory. There are strong links with the parish and wider community that have a positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Plans to promote further national and global links are in their initial stages.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 3 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers | 3 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 3 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 3 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter reception with skills that are mostly well below those expected for their age. This is particularly so in language, number and emotional development. Children make satisfactory progress and the Year 1 curriculum caters well for those still working at low levels when they transfer to Key Stage 1. Children's personal development is good because of the warm, welcoming environment and the high quality care provided by the staff. Even during their first sessions in school, children settle well and are keen to participate. This is because there is a wide variety of exciting and stimulating activities that are linked by a particular theme. Children are proud of their attempts to write a recipe for the bears' porridge, whilst others construct a cottage for them. Activities are amended to take children's interests into consideration whilst maintaining a sharp focus on the improvement of basic skills. Observational assessments are well documented and inform planning.

Home visits have enhanced the links with parents and carers and provide extra information that gives a firm base for the start of children's learning. Actions are in place to improve links with the nursery settings. The newly appointed Early Years Foundation Stage leader is developing a strong team with a clear vision for the future and is determined to make further improvements. Provision has been recently and significantly improved. All areas of learning are well-resourced, there is now ease of movement between indoor and outdoor learning and planning reflects the needs and interests of the children. These improvements to provision are too recent to have had any significant impact of outcomes for the children.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |

Views of parents and carers

A minority of parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire. All of those that did respond feel that St. Vincent's keeps their children safe and most say that their children enjoy school. A minority of parents and carers expressed concerns about behaviour. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils behave well in class and plans are in place to address any unacceptable behaviour in the playground.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Vincent's RC Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 51 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 204 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 18 | 35 | 30 | 59 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 21 | 41 | 26 | 51 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 4 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 12 | 24 | 27 | 53 | 8 | 16 | 3 | 6 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 11 | 22 | 29 | 57 | 7 | 14 | 3 | 6 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 9 | 18 | 35 | 69 | 4 | 8 | 3 | 6 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 12 | 24 | 31 | 61 | 5 | 10 | 3 | 6 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 10 | 20 | 35 | 69 | 4 | 8 | 1 | 2 |
| The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment) | 7 | 14 | 33 | 65 | 9 | 18 | 2 | 4 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 11 | 22 | 32 | 63 | 4 | 8 | 3 | 6 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 11 | 22 | 23 | 45 | 13 | 25 | 4 | 8 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 9 | 18 | 32 | 63 | 7 | 14 | 2 | 4 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 9 | 18 | 33 | 65 | 5 | 10 | 3 | 6 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 12 | 24 | 31 | 61 | 5 | 10 | 3 | 6 |

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

| Grade | Judgement | Description |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs. |
| Grade 2 | Good | These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory | These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. |

Overall effectiveness of schools

| Type of school | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools | 58 | 36 | 4 | 2 |
| Primary schools | 8 | 43 | 40 | 9 |
| Secondary schools | 10 | 35 | 42 | 13 |
| Sixth forms | 13 | 39 | 45 | 3 |
| Special schools | 33 | 42 | 20 | 4 |
| Pupil referral units | 18 | 40 | 29 | 12 |
| All schools | 11 | 42 | 38 | 9 |

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training. |
| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement. |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school. |
| Learning: | how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners. |
| Overall effectiveness: | <p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support. |
| Progress: | the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started. |

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



24 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Vincent's RC Primary School, Newcastle-upon-Tyne,
NE6 2TX

Thank you very much for making the inspection team so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed being in your lessons and talking to you about your work. Please also thank your parents and carers for their letters.

It was good to know that you feel extremely safe at St. Vincent's and that your teachers listen to you and are there to help if necessary. We were impressed by your 'ambassadors' who confidently introduced us to your classes. You behave well in your lessons and certainly enjoy sharing your ideas, acting as 'Intelligent Friends'. We know the school council are working towards improving the playground which will provide more games to keep you busy and happy at playtimes. You also make good contributions to the community, keen to make your local environment better. Your involvement in the ABC programme gives you a good understanding of how to keep yourselves safe.

Overall, your school provides you with a satisfactory education. You are now making better progress in your English, particularly in writing. Well done! To become even better, especially in mathematics, we have asked your teachers to help you to understand what you need to do to improve and to plan work that matches this. The school is also going to track your progress more carefully to make sure you always make as much progress as possible.

You can do your part by continuing to enjoy school. Keep collecting Froggets to show how well you can behave.

Good luck for the future

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Carol Gater

Lead Inspector

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