

St. Norbert's Catholic Primary

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120616
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	339732
Inspection dates	17–18 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Clive Lewis

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

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	144
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr. Tony Bray
Headteacher	Mrs. Elizabeth Jordan
Date of previous school inspection	7 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors visited 7 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work including a sample of pupils' books and looked at safeguarding procedures. They scrutinized internal assessment and tracking data and analysed questionnaires from 51 parents, 95 pupils and 12 staff.

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

- Early Years Foundation Stage provision, particularly planning and resourcing for the outdoor curriculum
- Outcomes for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- Provision and outcomes for newly-arrived pupils for whom English is an additional language

Information about the school

The school is smaller than most and is the only Catholic primary school in the Lincolnshire market town of Spalding. As a result, pupils attend from a wide area. Fewer pupils than average claim free school meals. Since the last inspection, the number arriving with little or no English, frequently mid-year or mid-key stage, has increased significantly. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities has also increased and is now well above the national average. Classes throughout the school are mixed-age. Pupils' attainment on entry to the Reception class is below that typically found. The school has recently gained the Basic Skills Quality Mark 10 Year award.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

St. Norbert's is a good school which has improved since the last inspection and continues to do so following a prolonged period of staff turbulence. Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides a clear sense of purpose and direction, clearly linked to school improvement. The effective leadership and teamwork of the headteacher and deputy coupled with a stable staffing situation has ensured that teaching and learning has improved and clear priorities have been set for further improvement. The school is a warm Christian community that welcomes every pupil. It has responded well to the considerable changes in its intake including the high level of mobility and the significant percentage of pupils arriving with little or no English. Parents are very supportive of the school. They like the positive family atmosphere and one parent, typical of many, commented: 'The school has a really strong belief in nurturing children. It is very good at recognising a child's abilities and supporting or challenging accordingly'. Staff want the best for each child and, through working closely with families, strive to achieve this goal.

Children get off to a satisfactory start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make satisfactory progress. Planning, provision and resourcing for the outdoor curriculum is currently limited and as a result, children do not have enough opportunities to develop their independent learning skills. Throughout the school all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the increasing number for whom English is an additional language, make good progress in their time in school. Standards in the latest national tests were in line with national averages at Year 2 and Year 6, an improvement on the previous year.

Arrangements for the evaluation and monitoring of teaching and learning are good and the quality of teaching is good as a result. Pupils' personal development is good overall. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe and of the need for healthy lifestyles. Parents say their children enjoy coming to school and pupils agree enthusiastically, as is reflected in their very good levels of attendance. A strong moral code is implicit within the school's ethos and this is reflected in pupils' exemplary behaviour. This in turn has a very positive effect on the good progress pupils make in lessons. They work hard and conscientiously, both independently and co-operatively, without the need for constant adult intervention. The curriculum ensures that pupils receive a good variety of exciting activities and experiences through visits, residential stays and visitors to school. Pupils particularly enjoy the wide range of after-school activities and clubs, including physical activities. Pastoral care of pupils is good and academic guidance is now good, a significant improvement on the previous inspection. Pupils are tracked carefully and data analysed rigorously to ensure any pupil falling

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behind is identified quickly and support is provided. The school has good links with Catholic organisations in this country and beyond but realizes it could do more to strengthen ties with groups in the local area. The school has a good understanding of how well it is doing and what needs to be done next and has a good capacity to maintain and sustain improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve planning, resourcing and staffing for the 'outdoor curriculum' in the Early Years Foundation Stage in order to further develop children's independent learning skills.
 - Strengthen efforts to develop better links within the local community beyond the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

School assessment and tracking data show that most pupils, across the range of abilities, are achieving well. Despite this good progress, standards at the end of both key stages are in line with national averages. This is because of the above-average number of pupils for whom English is an additional language and/or have been in school for only a short time and the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs. For example, English is a second language for more than half of the current Reception intake and a significant number of pupils in the previous year's Year 6 cohort had joined the school in Years 5 and 6, some only a few weeks before the tests, speaking no English. As a result, although these pupils make good and sometimes rapid progress in their time in school, overall standards at the end of Year 6 remain in line with national. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the effective support provided by teachers, teaching assistants and outside agencies. Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their high levels of attendance. One parent wrote: 'My children are always happy to go to school each day. The school has a lovely welcoming feel about it and my children know everyone in the whole school'. Pupils' behaviour is excellent and a credit to the school and reflects their very good spiritual, moral and social development. However, pupils' understanding of and empathy with other cultures and religions is only satisfactory. Their good understanding and adoption of safe, healthy lifestyles is illustrated by the significant number who cycle to school every day. Pupils contribute well to school and local communities through the work of the school council and regular collections for a number of charities. They value their school community and participate constructively in school life. By the time they leave the school pupils' excellent behaviour and good social skills have prepared them well for the future world of work.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Classroom routines are made clear by teachers and are regularly enforced so that learning takes place in a well-structured environment and all pupils can contribute to lessons. Teachers are well-supported by effective and skilled teaching assistants who are fully involved in lessons and ensure that pupils receive extra help as they need it. As a result of good assessment and tracking procedures, teachers are able to plan well, in most cases providing a range of work well-matched to the different ages and abilities in each mixed-age class. Learning intentions are made clear at the beginning of each lesson and, as a result, pupils know precisely what it is that they are expected to learn. Pupils are provided with good feedback, they know how well they are doing and what they can do to improve.

The curriculum provides a good range of experiences through visits, residential stays and visitors to school. It is adjusted effectively to meet the needs of different groups within the school. Cross-curricular provision, including literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology is mainly good although the school is, rightly, currently working on improving cross-curricular links in the Key Stage 2 curriculum.

The school has well-organised arrangements for the care of all pupils which contributes to their good development and well-being and supports their learning effectively. Several parents praised the caring ethos of the school and one parent wrote: 'The

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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school maintains a high standard of care, educationally emotionally and spiritually'. Clearly targeted support for pupils with special educational needs and pupils learning English as an additional language has resulted in good progress for these pupils.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The strong and effective team of headteacher and deputy headteacher communicate high expectations to staff about securing improvement. They make good use of a range of rigorous monitoring activities. They have tackled key areas of weakness, including those in teaching, systematically and, building on areas of strength, have secured improvement so that teaching is now good. All staff are strongly motivated and the school has a clear sense of direction including a strong commitment to improving provision even further. Subject coordinators are very enthusiastic about their new roles but have yet to assume responsibility for analysing data from the school's annual test results in order to identify the most important areas for improvement in each subject. Teamwork is promoted strongly and is reflected in the school's well-focused improvement plan.

The governors fulfil their roles well and have a good overview of the school's work and future priorities. The school has a positive relationship with most groups of parents and regularly asks for their views and acts on the responses. Effective liaison with parents and carers contributes to improvements in pupils' achievement, well-being and development. The school's good links with partners contribute well to pupils' good achievement and well being. Equality of opportunity is promoted well. The school's safeguarding procedures meet recommended good practice across all areas of its work and are in line with government requirements, although it recognises there is a need to formalise systems for recording actions taken to resolve concerns. The school identifies dangers, fosters a realistic understanding of risk and helps pupils to keep themselves safe. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion. Although it has strong and developing links with Catholic schools and organisations nationally and overseas, it realises there is a need to further develop the local, wider and global dimensions.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision for the youngest children is satisfactory. Children enter the Reception class with skills that are below those typically found for their age, especially in communication, language and literacy skills. One week into her post, the new Early Years Foundation Stage leader and teacher has made a good start in developing systems and routines. Children clearly enjoy school and, after being there for only one week, they have settled into the routines well and play happily together and individually. They undertake a variety of whole class and group activities and, in most cases, co-operate well when working with others. They delight in learning and seeing new things. Good relationships are being developed with parents and carers through daily contact. Pastoral care and welfare arrangements are effective. Consequently, children are safe, well cared for and aware of how to be healthy. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified quickly, are well-supported and are integrated well into all activities. However, although the classroom has a small, secure outdoor area, directly accessible from the classroom, there is currently insufficient equipment or adult support to allow children to explore things with purpose and challenge. Opportunities are missed for children to select activities for themselves as 'free-choice' and this hampers the development of their independent learning skills. Adults have a sound knowledge of the learning and development and welfare requirements and guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff have positive relationships with children and activities such as music and movement sessions are fun. Adults manage children and their behaviour appropriately. Some progress has been made in developing secure systems for the long-term assessment and tracking of children's progress and staff monitor and record children's progress on a day to day

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basis effectively.

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	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The large majority of parents are entirely satisfied with the school. The proportion of questionnaires returned was better than in most schools and of these, most were generally positive. In two of the areas surveyed, relating to the way in which the school keeps the children safe and helps them to develop a healthy lifestyle, all of the responses were positive. In most other areas 90% or more of parents were positive. However, 14% of parents who responded to the questionnaire felt that the school could do more to support their children's learning. Written comments on these forms include suggestions from a number of parents that too much homework was given and, from a small number of parents, that the school should do more to support children entering for the 11 plus examination. The inspectors investigated these matters and do not feel the criticism is justified.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St. Norbert's Catholic 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 59 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 144 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	27	53	23	45	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	27	53	24	47	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	22	43	24	47	4	8	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	35	26	51	6	12	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	24	47	22	43	3	6	2	4
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	37	24	47	7	14	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	39	30	59	0	0	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)	22	43	21	41	3	6	3	6
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	39	26	51	4	8	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	37	26	51	2	4	3	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	37	23	45	4	8	4	8
The school is led and managed effectively	24	47	22	43	3	6	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	47	22	43	5	10	0	0

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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.



21 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St. Norbert's Catholic Primary School, Spalding, PE1 1NJ

I would like to thank you for your help during the recent inspection of your school. My colleague and I very much enjoyed our visit.

St. Norbert's is a good school and I'm pleased to say that an outstanding feature of the school is your excellent behaviour! You work hard and try to succeed in all that you do. Your headteacher and staff are leading the school well. They make sure you understand how to look after yourselves and keep safe and you are good at doing this. They care for you well and give you good support to enable you to enjoy your lessons. You told us that your teachers were fair and sorted things out quickly. You said that you really like your school and there are lots of things to do and enjoy. We agree with you.

We have asked your school to do two things that will make it even better:

Develop a better range of outdoor activities for the youngest children in the school

Develop more links with schools and companies in the local area

You too can contribute to the further improvement of your school by continuing to attend with the same positive attitudes and willingness that you show at the moment.

Yours faithfully

Clive Lewis

Lead Inspector

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