

St John Bosco Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	103991
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	377004
Inspection dates	8–9 February 2012
Lead inspector	David 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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	258
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Timothy Burke
Headteacher	Edward Masterson
Date of previous school inspection	28 April 2009
School address	Monmouth Drive West Bromwich B71 2ST
Telephone number	0121 5560228
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Age group	3–11
Inspection date(s)	8–9 February 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

David Lewis

Additional inspector

Christopher Parker

Additional inspector

Linda Rowley

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors visited a total of 14 lessons or parts of lessons, including two sessions in the Nursery. All eight teachers were observed at least once, and eight structured phonics sessions (the learning of the sounds that letters make) were also seen, taught by support staff, including higher-level teaching assistants. Meetings were held with parents and carers, groups of pupils, members of the governing body, and staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, and the 69 questionnaires returned by parents and carers. The views expressed in staff and pupils' questionnaires were also taken into account. Inspectors also looked at documentation on pupils' attainment and progress, and a range of policies and other documents, including those relating to safeguarding.

Information about the school

St John Bosco Catholic Primary School is an average-sized primary school, with Early Years Foundation Stage provision in morning and afternoon Nursery classes and one Reception class. A privately run breakfast club operates each morning. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. An above-average proportion, just under half of the pupils, is of minority ethnic heritage. Most of these are Polish or Asian, predominantly Indian. Nearly a third speak English as an additional language, a well-above average proportion, with many Polish speakers. An above-average proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and two have statements of special educational needs. About half the pupils are Roman Catholic, and the school is oversubscribed in all year groups. The number of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the normal time is above average. The school is enjoying a period of staffing stability following the appointment of the current headteacher in 2009. The school holds a Healthy Schools Platinum award, is an ICT Hub of Excellence for information and communication technology in Sandwell, and holds a full International Schools Award, with partner schools in The Gambia, India and Poland. The school meets current floor standards.

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	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- This is an outstanding school. When children arrive in the Nursery, their skills and abilities are considerably below those expected at their age. They develop rapidly throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage. Teaching that is usually at least good and often outstanding ensures that they maintain excellent progress so that attainment, at the end of Year 6, is above average. Many, but not yet all pupils write neatly and present their work to a high standard. The vast majority of pupils, parents and carers are extremely positive about the teaching and care that the school provides.
- Teachers are very aware of pupils' individual needs, and the school works relentlessly to ensure that they are met. Structured phonics sessions (linking words and sounds) are well organised so that children quickly learn to read and write. The special needs coordinator manages a comprehensive system of support for pupils who find the work difficult. This support is based upon the school's excellent tracking system and makes an exceptional contribution to the excellent progress of all groups of pupils.
- Pupils are unfailingly polite, and their maturity and enthusiasm contribute greatly to their learning. They support one another well, and are very sensitive to the needs of others. Pupils take full advantage of the school's excellent and varied curriculum, in which creativity is highly valued. As a result, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- The headteacher and his deputy work very successfully and in close collaboration with staff and members of the governing body to provide pupils with an outstanding education. The governors are fastidious in ensuring that they understand the school's needs, and hold the headteacher and all leaders to account.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation throughout the school by:
 - ensuring that all teachers accept only pupils' best work

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- providing more time for pupils to record their ideas.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Achievement is outstanding for all groups of learners, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. By the time pupils leave school their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above average. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children who speak English as an additional language make excellent progress because teachers make perceptive use of home-language support for them. Parents are invited to join in Reception class lessons and within this supportive ethos children confidently and independently work together in activities they have initiated for themselves.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage children's language acquisition is very successfully developed and extended. Here, and in Years 1 and 2, pupils make rapid progress in reading as a result of this focus on communication skills and daily sessions of structured phonics. Most pupils in Year 2 can read a range of texts, and standards in reading are close to the national average by the end of Key Stage 1. Activities such as weighing and measuring help to develop mathematical skills in parallel with communication skills. By Year 5, pupils can present a balanced and sensitive argument. For example, an excellent discussion on racism in football was observed, where pupils listened well to each other and deepened their understanding of tolerance and prejudice.

By the end of Year 6, the great majority of pupils are reading at levels that are above, and sometimes considerably above, average. They use advanced vocabulary to create mood by linking ideas and communication skills are celebrated in all lessons. However, this correct emphasis on discussion skills means that pupils do not always get sufficient practice to develop the quality of their handwriting skills and presentation sometimes suffers.

Pupils also benefit from opportunities to participate in cultural activities. In a singing lesson, for example, they showed an excellent appreciation of how the mood of the words informs the style of the music. In science and history, they do well as a result of activities that both challenge and inspire them. The overwhelming majority of parents rightly say that their children make good progress at the school.

The number of pupils who join the school other than at the usual time is high. Those with English as an additional language have intensive language support so that they are quickly integrated, and make rapid progress in all subjects.

Quality of teaching

Teachers have high expectations, and their enthusiasm and excellent subject

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knowledge inspires pupils. Assessment information is used well to match work accurately to the needs of all abilities, so that all pupils are challenged. Marking is developmental and this feedback shows pupils clearly how well they have achieved and what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils take great delight in striving towards their targets, and they become more independent in their learning. Pupils' understanding is assessed rigorously through well-crafted questions and they are encouraged to explain their thinking to each other and to the class. Support staff are very effective when working with all abilities. They provide the right balance between support and challenge. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also make exceptional progress because the support they receive is well targeted.

Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they have good opportunities to practise and extend their communication and mathematical skills. However, there are missed opportunities for pupils to record their ideas and teachers sometimes accept too readily written work that is not well presented. Pupils can articulate their ideas using well-chosen vocabulary, and demonstrate their ability to think logically as mathematicians. Excellent use of computers led to big gains in understanding in a Year 4 mathematics lesson, where they were able to practise their calculation skills in a relevant context. Pupils greatly enjoy undertaking investigations in science, and are proud of their history projects.

Development of spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is fostered by activities that promote curiosity and creativity. Pupils are highly motivated and know that their efforts will be recognised and celebrated. There is always a buzz of purposeful activity in classes reflecting pupil's tremendous ability to sustain their concentration. Teachers and support staff are at the centre of this activity, constantly monitoring progress, subtly modifying the challenge where necessary, and always on the lookout for ways of enhancing the learning process.

Pupils are extremely positive about the teaching the school provides, saying that teachers and support staff give them stimulating and enjoyable tasks to do, and that it is easy to approach them for help. Almost all parents and carers who responded in writing to the parental questionnaire spoke of the excellent response they have when their children find the work difficult.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Excellent relationships both in the classroom and more widely across the school contribute exceptionally well to pupils' own social skills. Periods of outdoor play are harmonious and managed so that playtime is a safe opportunity for pupils to 'let off steam'. The mutual respect between pupils and staff makes a very positive contribution to the smooth running of the school. Consequently, pupils know the difference between right and wrong, and are confident that if they have any worries, teachers will deal with the matter fairly and consistently.

The school takes its obligation to promote safety very seriously, for example in sessions on cycling proficiency, fire safety, drug awareness, and e-safety. Every pupil

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takes a basic first aid course. Scrutiny of school records shows that bullying of all kinds is exceptionally rare and the number of recorded behaviour incidents is minimal. In discussions, pupils show outstanding awareness of what makes a situation unsafe, and how to deal with situations that concern them. They are well aware of internet safety and different forms of bullying, including prejudice-based bullying and cyber-bullying. Almost all parents say that their children are well looked after in a safe and secure environment. They appreciate the improvements that have been made over the last three years and they, as well as pupils, are highly positive about behaviour in the school. In lessons, pupils work in true partnership with each other and with all adults. In discussions they confirm that they enjoy coming to school, and their diligent approach to their learning within this calm and orderly environment contributes well to the exceptional progress they make. The school has taken a series of robust measures to improve attendance. As a result it has improved considerably over the last two years, and is now above average.

Leadership and management

The headteacher, senior leaders, and the governing body have implemented the recommendations from the last inspection with a purposeful enthusiasm that has inspired staff at all levels. Frequent tracking of progress for groups and individuals, means that the school knows how each pupil is progressing, enabling teachers to intervene when necessary. The school is committed to promoting equality and rigorously tackles discrimination. Senior staff monitor and evaluate teaching and learning rigorously, and actively manage the deployment of teachers and support staff to secure the best progress. All pupils in this diverse community are supported in accordance with their needs, are afforded equal opportunities, and make excellent progress as a result

Governors and senior management have shown themselves to be conspicuously successful in managing the overall staffing structure for maximum impact. The sustained trend of improvement since the last inspection, in attainment by the end of Key Stage 2, in attendance, and in the achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, is supported by clear monitoring evidence. The headteacher's relentless drive and excellent management skills are reflected in the rapid progress that the school has made in the last three years. The impressive track record of improvement and the quality of leadership combine to show the school's outstanding capacity to improve further.

The governing body shares leaders' and managers' ambitious vision for the school. Governors are highly skilled, know the school first hand, and are perceptive in making appointments. By astute financial management and prudence they have ensured that money is available where needed to support the acquisition of new resources – for example, new computers and the development of the outdoor area for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and contributes strongly to pupils' excellent cultural and spiritual development. Links with schools in Poland, India and The

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Gambia further enhance pupils' cultural development. The strong sense of right and wrong promoted by members of the governing body and school alike plays a major part in the equal value in which each pupil is held and the harmonious atmosphere that pervades the school.

The school meets its statutory obligations in relation to safeguarding.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



10 February 2012

Dear Pupils

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

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed talking to many of you. You were excellent at explaining what you like about your school, and the exciting things you do. We especially liked seeing you enjoying your lessons so much, and the way that you look after one another in the playground as well as in class.

You go to an outstanding school. You behave very well indeed and this helps you to learn quickly. We were impressed by the way that you try hard, and learn to read and write so quickly in the Reception class. We also enjoyed seeing how absorbed you become in what you are doing, and how you work together to solve problems. You sing very well indeed. Your teachers arrange a lot of exciting things for you to do, including visits to events outside school. Your headteacher and teachers are doing an excellent job and very much enjoy teaching you. In order to help you even more, we have asked them to:

- help those of you whose handwriting is not always good to improve it, so you can present your work as well as possible, and make it attractive and easy to understand.

You can help by always taking as much care as you possibly can with your handwriting.

We want you to continue to love learning as much as you do now and enjoy your time at St John Bosco.

Yours sincerely

David Lewis
Lead inspector

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