

St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School, Englefield Green

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125209
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	315192
Inspection date	16 June 2008
Reporting inspector	George Rayner

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 on roll	
School	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	The Hon. David Elfer
Headteacher	Mrs Rosemary Wilder
Date of previous school inspection	24 February 2004
School address	Bagshot Road Englefield Green Egham TW20 0RY
Telephone number	01784 434128
Fax number	01784 477270

Age group	4-11
Inspection date	16 June 2008
Inspection number	315192

© Crown copyright 2008

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 an Additional Inspector. Evidence was gathered from: lesson observations, discussion with staff, pupils and governors, the scrutiny of pupils' work, assessment data and the school's documentation. Parents' questionnaires and additional comments were analysed and the inspector met one parent.

Description of the school

The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below average. Most of these pupils have moderate difficulty in developing literacy or numeracy skills at the same rate as their classmates. The great majority of pupils have White British heritage and none are currently at an early stage of learning to speak English.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. The great majority of parents agree. They say that their children are extremely happy here and that they make excellent progress. One parent voiced the opinions of many in saying, 'I feel very honoured that my children attend this fantastic school'. Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils say emphatically that they love their school. They show this through their excellent attendance, extremely good behaviour and their cheerfulness. They work very hard and show considerable independence by not needing close supervision to do so. Pupils say that one of the best things about their school is that it is just like being in a happy family. They settle in very quickly, make many friends and have highly caring attitudes towards each other. They are proud that their excellent behaviour contributes very strongly to their successful learning. While the school's Catholic ethos forms a strong basis for their spiritual development, pupils are very aware of the diversity of cultures and beliefs in Britain. They enjoy learning about other religions and speak knowledgeably about the similarities and differences with their own. Pupils are highly knowledgeable about how to keep themselves healthy. They understand that a balanced diet can include a few treats and are exuberantly active at playtimes. Pupils' outstanding progress prepares them excellently for their future lives and learning.

Pupils' achievement is outstanding. They usually exceed their challenging targets so that, in most years, their standards in English, mathematics and science are exceptionally high by the end of Year 6. Pupils become expert readers. Most develop a secure understanding of the techniques that authors use to make writing varied and interesting when, for example, choosing particular words for effect. This is reflected in the high quality of their own writing. Pupils show considerable independence in mathematics. They persevere with difficult problems and are willing to try different methods when the first one does not work. Pupils' breadth of scientific knowledge is extensive. They often add to this by asking thoughtful questions of their own and suggesting ways to experiment to find the answers. The needs of the pupils who find it difficult to learn at the same rate as others are carefully identified and they are given very effective help. As a result, they make as much progress as their classmates.

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Pupils say that teachers are very good at giving them fun things to do. This was seen in a Year 5 lesson, in which pupils thoroughly enjoyed working together on research to find out about what a poet is attempting to achieve with his writing. Teachers work very effectively with teaching assistants to ensure that any pupils finding the work difficult receive the additional help that they need to keep up with the pace of work. Teachers question pupils very well, in an open-ended way that encourages them to think for themselves. A particular strength is the success with which teachers balance giving pupils clear directions, with letting them have considerable scope to manage their own learning and make choices independently. This gives pupils full scope for their ability and imagination and, because they respond so well, is an important ingredient in their high achievement. Teachers use marking very well to encourage pupils and boost their confidence, while taking every opportunity to guide them on how they might improve their work.

The curriculum is good overall. It has excellent features, especially in providing rich and varied learning experiences for pupils to develop their literacy, numeracy and scientific skills and knowledge. Information and communication technology has recently been an improvement focus and, as a result, pupils now have very good opportunities to use computers to enhance their learning across the subjects. This was seen when Year 6 pupils used the internet to carry

out research to help them learn about different styles of painting and were able to knowledgeably discuss the differences between the styles of Monet and Canaletto. The school is aware that, while never less than good, provision is not of such high quality in a small number of subjects. For example, physical education and design technology provide less varied opportunities than most subjects to learn in creative ways.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher provides an exceptional vision and there is a high degree of shared unity of purpose throughout the school. The highly cohesive leadership team sets expectations, while leaving staff considerable scope to develop their own ideas. Governors have recently worked effectively to improve their contribution in monitoring and evaluating the school's work, which has considerably enhanced their value as 'critical friends'. Systems for monitoring and evaluation are very efficient and staff working at all levels contribute. In spite of the school's successes, there is a complete absence of complacency. This means that, while tinged with a strongly self-challenging approach, which makes it a little modest in some respects, self-evaluation is very accurate in identifying areas for further improvement. Actions taken have been highly effective in first securing, then sustaining, high quality and performance.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children's attainment on entry varies from year to year. In most years, they enter the school with knowledge and skills that are higher than the expected levels for their age. In some years, including for the current Year 6, entry standards are closer to expected levels. Children make an excellent start in the Foundation Stage. The very caring environment ensures that they settle in quickly and learn to work and play happily together. The adults work together very well to provide a stimulating variety of learning experiences. This includes an excellent balance between activities that are adult led and those that let children learn independently by playing and exploring. The school has recently improved the outdoor area to further enhance opportunities for children to learn independently. By the time they leave the Reception class, children are very secure in all areas of learning and many are already moving forward strongly towards the levels that they need to develop in Years 1 and 2.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all subjects are as effective as the best in providing rich, varied and imaginative learning opportunities.

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?	1
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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is 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
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
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	1

The quality of provision

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

¹ 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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

27 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School, Englefield Green, Egham, TW20 0RY

Thank you for welcoming me to your school recently. I enjoyed meeting you. I am grateful for the help you gave, by talking to me and showing me your work. I was able to see that yours is an outstanding school. You make excellent progress in English, mathematics and science. By the time you are in Year 6, your standards are much higher than those that we see in most schools. You are expert readers and I really enjoyed reading some of your high quality writing. In mathematics and science, you develop high levels of skills and knowledge and are very good at using these to find things out for yourselves.

One reason that you do so well is that your teachers give you lots of excellent lessons. Some of you told me that they often give you fun things to do. I saw how much some of you in Year 5 enjoyed working together to plan presentations about poetry for the younger pupils. Some Year 6 pupils used the internet to find out about artists so well that they amazed me with what they knew. There are a few subjects where teachers do not use their imagination quite so well to make your learning special. I have asked them to tackle this, so that all subjects can be as good as the very best.

Another important reason why you do so well is your own outstanding personal development. The adults are very proud of you. They say that you help them greatly, with your excellent attendance, behaviour, cheerfulness and willingness to work hard. I could see that this is true. Some of you told me that your school is like a happy family and that you all help each other. Well done to you all and very best wishes for your future lives.

Yours sincerely

George Rayner

Lead Inspector