

St Bede's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School

Ridge Terrace, Bedlington, Northumberland NE22 6EQ

Inspection dates

21–22 September 2016

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher, staff and governors have a shared vision for the school. There has been a marked improvement in the quality of teaching and pupils' learning since the last inspection.
- Outcomes for pupils are good and have improved since the last inspection. Pupils clearly enjoy their work, tackling learning with determination and a strong desire to succeed. They work hard and productively.
- Pupils make good progress in their learning from their individual starting points and achieve well. This includes disadvantaged pupils and the most able.
- Pupils' consideration of others and their positive attitudes to learning ensure that their personal development and welfare are good.
- Provision in the early years is good. Children develop positive attitudes to learning due to the nurturing environment and fun activities on offer.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are very polite, friendly and courteous, and have good manners.
- Governors consistently challenge the school and hold senior leaders to account. They know the school very well.
- Not all pupils are regularly set sufficiently challenging tasks to extend their learning, especially the most able pupils.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to use their mathematics skills in other subjects, or to understand how mathematics can help them in their day-to-day lives.
- Attendance rates for a small group of pupils are too low.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders should ensure that the quality of teaching improves still further so that all pupils make the rapid and sustained progress needed to reach the highest standards of which they are capable by:
 - ensuring that all pupils are consistently set challenging tasks to extend their learning, especially the most able pupils
 - pupils have more opportunities to use their mathematics skills in other subjects and to understand how mathematics can help them in their day-to-day lives.
- Improve attendance rates for a small group of pupils who do not attend regularly enough.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders and governors are ambitious for the school and work effectively as a team to bring about continuous improvement. They have been successful in creating a culture of high expectations in which good teaching, learning and behaviour flourishes.
- Since the previous inspection, middle leaders have enhanced their roles in their areas of responsibility through observing teaching, checking pupils' books, analysing pupil performance and leading training. This has led to an increased leadership capacity. They identify the best practice in their areas of responsibility and share this widely across the school.
- Procedures to check the quality of teaching are very effective and involve middle leaders as well as the senior leadership team. All leaders are skilful in ensuring that their analysis and interpretation of information about pupils' progress leads to actions that address any areas of concern.
- The school's leaders ensure that teachers provide feedback to pupils which is consistently of a high standard across the school, in adherence to the school's marking policy. Pupils make good use of the time they are given to read and respond to the marking, which supports their next steps in learning well.
- Leaders and managers ensure that pupils' progress is carefully tracked. Senior leaders and staff carry out regular checks on pupils' progress to ensure that pupils who are not doing as well as they should are quickly identified, and appropriate remedial measures taken. Additional support is put in place to help these pupils make better progress. As a result, different groups of pupils, including pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress. This demonstrates leaders' commitment to promoting equality of opportunity for all pupils and tackling discrimination.
- The feedback provided to pupils by teachers is consistently of a high standard across the school. Pupils are allowed time to read and respond to the marking, supporting their next steps in learning.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils' strong personal development is in part due to a curriculum that strongly contributes to their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' clear understanding of right and wrong contributes very well to them respecting other cultures and values and prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- The physical education and sports premium is helping to raise the profile of sporting activities in school. Work with sports coaches is developing the skills of staff and pupils. As a result, the school has seen increased participation in local sporting competitions.
- The local authority and diocese have provided some effective support since the previous inspection. In particular, they have been involved with staff training and helping school leaders evaluate the impact of its work. The local authority and diocese are rightly confident that the school will maintain its pace of school improvement with the need for only light-touch support.
- Parents and carers are very positive about the work of the school. Of those who responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, the overwhelming majority said they would recommend the school to another parent. They note that their children

are happy and feel safe at St Bede's. One parent stated, 'The teachers are always very approachable and have really helped my children do their best.'

- Teachers work closely together to review the curriculum regularly, checking that it meets the specific needs of pupils at St Bede's and reflects their interests. It is enriched by a wide range of trips and visitors to the school.
- Pupils have the chance to participate in a number of extra-curricular clubs which support their learning. These are appreciated and valued by both pupils and parents.

Governance of the school

- There have been a number of changes in the membership of the governing body since the previous inspection. Governors now provide the appropriate levels of support and challenge to senior leaders. They visit the school to gain first-hand information, and carefully consider the information provided for them by senior leaders and middle managers. They have a secure understanding of the strengths of the school and also areas where it can improve.
- Governors bring a good range of skills and knowledge to their roles and they use these well to ask searching questions of school leaders. Through the training they receive, governors have a good understanding of the performance information and know how pupils, including different groups of pupils, are doing in the school. Governors have also received training in safeguarding, including 'Prevent' training, to help them recognise any signs of radicalisation and extremism.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders, governors and staff work closely to ensure that pupils are safe. All staff receive regular training on safeguarding and are aware of how to identify whether pupils are at risk and the reporting procedures if they have any concerns. The school knows its pupils very well, and detailed records are kept about all safeguarding issues.
- All required checks on adults to work with pupils are carried out and recorded suitably. A clear culture of high-quality practice exists across the school.
- Almost all parents responding to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, say that their children feel safe at school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is now consistently good and has improved since the last inspection. The impact of this good teaching on learning has resulted in pupils making good progress and reaching higher levels of achievement.
- Teaching assistants and teachers work closely together to ensure that timely and constructive advice and support is given to pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The quality of support is high, whether adults are working with a group or an individual pupil, resulting in good academic progress, as well as strong emotional and social development.
- Leaders and teachers now make sure that those pupils who did not achieve the standard in the phonics screening check in Year 1 are well supported with their reading in Year 2 and Year 3 and subsequently make good progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils are well known to all staff. Teachers use the regular information

gathered on these pupils' current progress to plan learning that enables them to achieve well. Teachers ensure that any pupils at risk of underachievement are provided with additional support. Pupils who spoke with inspectors said that 'lessons are fun' because 'teachers think carefully about the activities they plan'.

- The most able pupils do not achieve as well as they should. For example, in a mathematics lesson, where pupils were practising two different ways of solving subtraction problems, the most able pupils found this work too easy. They were not provided with work that challenged or promoted a higher level of understanding and so they did not achieve the higher levels they were capable of making.
- Reading skills are further extended as pupils move through school and the school is now making sure that pupils have a good understanding of what they read. Pupils are encouraged to explore different texts, often linked to the topic they are studying, and this helps them to develop a love of reading.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils report feeling safe at school at all times. They are aware of the different types of bullying that they may encounter, including cyber bullying. They know how to stay safe in a variety of situations, including when online. They are confident that, should any minor instances of misbehaviour occur, staff will resolve them quietly and effectively.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are extremely positive across the school. They work hard in class and always try their best. Pupils are proud of their achievements and those of others during celebration assemblies.
- The high quality of work seen in displays is reflected in the pride pupils take in how well their work in books is presented.
- In their responses to the online inspection questionnaire, nearly all parents indicated that their children felt safe in school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- This has improved since the last inspection. Most pupils behave well in lessons. They listen attentively to teachers and quickly get on with tasks set. Interruptions to learning are very rare and consequently pupils' progress is good.
- Staff set high standards to which pupils respond well. Pupils show high levels of respect and friendliness to adults, visitors and classmates. Older pupils show genuine care and concern for younger pupils and this creates a real 'family feel' to the school.
- Pupils are attentive and well behaved in lessons. They willingly answer questions and are keen to help and support other pupils. Pupils cooperate when working in groups and are mature enough to work independently and show initiative. In some lessons, pupils drift off task when the work is undemanding or not matched to their abilities, although they are polite enough not to disturb others while waiting for more work.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are largely very positive. They are very keen to learn. Their good attitudes to learning are an important factor behind their improving rates of progress.

- Pupils are proud of their school. They wear their uniform with pride and are keen to explain to visitors how friendly everyone is.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- As a result of the work done by the school's leaders to improve teaching, learning and assessment, outcomes for pupils are improving and this is being sustained in all year groups. At the previous inspection, pupils' progress was judged to be inconsistent in key stages 1 and 2 because of variations in the quality of teaching. All groups of pupils now make good progress in all key stages, and standards of attainment are rising.
- The most recent national assessment results reflect significant improvements to pupils' attainment and progress. They show that the progress made by all groups of pupils in relation to their different starting points is significantly better than at any time over the last three years. These improvements have also been reported on during previous monitoring inspections.
- The most able, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, make similarly good progress to their classmates, although sometimes opportunities are missed to fully challenge them, stretch their thinking and help them to achieve their potential.
- Pupils who are disadvantaged continue to make good progress and more are catching up with other pupils in the school. Increased emphasis on developing literacy and numeracy skills has led to gaps in attainment closing between advantaged and disadvantaged pupils in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school has a strong focus on the teaching of phonics in the early years and throughout Year 1 and Year 2. This supported significant improvement in the 2016 Year 1 phonics screening check, enabling results to rise above national expectations. This improvement is sustainable due to the effective teaching and learning strategies that have been put in place.
- Pupils are prepared well for the next stage in their educational journeys. The move from Nursery to Reception is carefully planned, for example by giving children steadily increasing opportunities to visit Reception and play alongside older children.
- The pupils who read to inspectors demonstrated strong fluency and understanding of the books they were reading. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoyed reading. Some of the most able pupils said that they would like more challenging texts.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make similarly good rates of progress towards their learning targets. They receive effective levels of support from teachers and support staff during lessons with their classmates, and when working separately as a group, or individually, during focused activities.

Early years provision

Good

- Children usually start the early years with knowledge and skills typical for their age. Good teaching enables the children to make good progress from their various starting points. Consequently, most children are well prepared for the next stage of their education in Year 1. This prepares them well for learning in Year 1.

- Well-focused leadership, teaching and support enable children to achieve well in the early years and leave with skills above the national average.
- Children make good progress in learning phonics. Lessons are well structured to allow children to practise saying and writing different letter blends. Teachers and support staff provide immediate guidance and correction where appropriate.
- Effective routines which encourage the highest standards of behaviour are in place. The children work and play well together while sharing resources. Staff are good role models and they ask children appropriate questions to improve their learning. Children receive lots of praise and encouragement so that they become confident learners.
- Staff keep a close check on the children's progress. They identify the learning needs of individual children, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those for whom the school receives additional funding. They then take the appropriate steps to ensure that pupils' needs are met effectively. Positive relationships are formed between the children and the adults so that the children are happy in school.
- The early years leader has an accurate view of the provision, which is continually improving. Staff work together as an effective team to improve pupils' learning opportunities.
- Children's positive attitudes are promoted well because the learning environments engage and interest them. Adults provide purposeful and exciting activities which are usually well matched to the children's needs and interests. For example, a strong focus on developing children's caring and sharing skills was seen during a Reception class session.
- Children behave and cooperate very well as a result of good-quality provision and high expectations. They adapt well to new routines and respond positively to their environment. Whether playing indoors or outdoors, children are happy and behave in ways that keep them safe. They showed they are able to make their own choices through discussion, such as with a partner during continuous play activities.

School details

Unique reference number	122308
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10012061

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	245
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Joan Riley
Headteacher	Mrs Therese Worrall (acting headteacher)
Telephone number	01670822389
Website	www.st-bedes.northumberland.sch.uk
Email address	3732admin@northumberland.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	17–18 June 2014

Information about this school

- St Bede's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School is an average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is below the national average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 21 lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. The inspectors also heard pupils read and looked at pupils' work in their books and on display.
- Meetings and discussions were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, middle leaders, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors met with a group of pupils, observed playtime and lunchtime, and talked with pupils and staff around the school.
- The inspectors examined a range of school documents, including information on pupils' progress across the school, development plans, minutes of governing body meetings and checks on the quality of teaching. They also examined the school records relating to behaviour, safety and attendance.
- The inspector's took account of 43 responses received from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. In addition, inspectors spoke with parents in the playground at the start of the school day and considered several letters from parents.

Inspection team

Geoffrey Seagrove, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Anne Vernon	Ofsted Inspector
Donna Callaghan	Ofsted Inspector

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