

St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Weymouth

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113837
Local Authority	Dorset
Inspection number	363810
Inspection dates	9–10 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Anna Sketchley

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rose Bruce
Headteacher	Michael Lobo
Date of previous school inspection	14 January 2008
School address	Hardy Avenue Weymouth, Dorset DT4 0RH
Telephone number	01305 782600
Fax number	01305 788038
Email address	office@staugustines.dorset.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
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M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons and observed six teachers and one higher level teaching assistant. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils and analysed 75 questionnaires from parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including pupils' work, systems for monitoring and tracking pupils' progress, plans for improvement, and reports written by the local authority. Questionnaires completed by 96 pupils and 21 staff were also evaluated.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The ability of leaders at all levels to continue to drive forward improvement.
- The strategies for improvement in teaching, learning and the curriculum and the impact they are having on the attainment and progress of all pupils, especially pupils in Year 6 and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils for whom English is not their first language.
- Whether the school's attendance procedures are rigorous enough to continue to improve pupils' attendance.
- The provision and progress of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

St Augustine's is an average size primary school situated in Weymouth. Pupils are drawn mainly from the surrounding area including Portland. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. Most pupils are of White British heritage and a very small minority are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The school has achieved several national awards, including the Healthy

Schools Award, Bronze Artsmark and the E-Twinning Quality Label. The school has its own swimming pool. There is a privately run Nursery, breakfast club and after-school club on site.

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 Augustine's is a good school. It has a number of outstanding features. Children in the Reception Year make very good progress because of excellent provision. By the time pupils leave the school, their attainment is high and pupils' achievement is outstanding. Pupils' progress accelerates rapidly in Year 6 but is uneven throughout the school. This is because there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning, specifically in the way tasks in lessons match the different abilities of pupils and in how well marking shows pupils how to improve. The school recognises this, and regular monitoring procedures and precise self-evaluation, leading to the correct priorities, are bringing about improvement. Rigorous tracking of pupils' progress has been implemented and good use is made of accurate assessment data. All teachers are becoming more accountable through the introduction of pupil progress meetings. Strategies for improving teaching and learning this year, such as teachers pairing up to observe and share good practice, are ensuring that all groups of pupils have an equal opportunity to make the progress of which they are capable. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils for whom English is not their first language. An original, innovative and extremely well planned curriculum, enabling all pupils to practise their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills widely, is particularly successful. This is good improvement since

the last inspection. Strong leadership from the senior team and governors, based on an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and a willing staff mean there is a strong determination to ensure that pupils in all classes achieve as well as they can. All of these developments are ensuring that the school has a good capacity to sustain further improvement.

The school's strong Christian ethos and excellent relationships underpin all its work and provide a very positive climate for learning. Parents endorse this judgement, making such comments as: 'We chose St Augustine's for its very strong Christian, pastoral ethos. We have been extremely happy with our choice of school for our son.' Very good partnerships with parents and other agencies, and strong links with local and international communities, especially the church, make a substantial contribution to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the cohesive nature of the school. Using the experience gained through the E-Twinning Quality Label, pupils have good opportunities to meet pupils and teachers from other countries and extend their understanding of cultures other than their own. There are fewer opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of the diverse cultures that exist in the United Kingdom. The school has rigorous procedures to deal with absenteeism but holidays taken in term time adversely affect attendance rates.

Pupils are extremely polite and behave well. This supports the good progress they make and helps them to enjoy school to the full. They show respect for one another and make a significant contribution to the life of the school and the local community. They have a very good understanding of what constitutes an unsafe situation, knowing clearly how to keep safe. They demonstrate their full commitment to a healthy lifestyle as they take part enthusiastically in all the sport offered to them and make positive choices about the food they eat. This is confirmed by the school's Healthy Schools Award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that pupils' progress is more even across the school, by:
 - ensuring that tasks in lessons are consistently set at different levels in order to meet the needs of all pupils
 - ensuring that marking consistently shows pupils how to take the next steps in their learning.
- Improve attendance by working with the small number of parents who remove their children during term time.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

Children enter school with levels of knowledge and skills expected for their age. National tests show that in 2010, attainment by the end of Year 2 improved and rose to above average. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics has been significantly above the national average for the past three years. The school's accurate tracking data shows that pupils in current Year 6 are making securely good progress in relation to their challenging targets. Pupils whose first language is not English and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress.

In an outstanding Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils shared and used very good independent skills whilst working on a novel by Michael Morpurgo. They were clear and confident about the task and as a result made excellent progress. Pupils' books in Year 6, particularly in literacy, show a very good range of appropriate tasks and substantial evidence of above average attainment and good progress over time. Pupils in Year 2 made very good progress and their attainment was above average in an outstanding mathematics lesson involving making a tally chart and constructing a block graph. They demonstrated that they fully understood their learning by framing searching questions when asked to interrogate the graphs. A Year 2 pupil with special educational needs was exceptionally well supported by a skilled teaching assistant, demonstrating an improvement in social skills whilst working well with other pupils and reaching at least average attainment in reading.

Pupils feel very safe in school and get on very well together. The excellent relationships throughout the school mean that if there are problems, pupils know whom to approach for help in sorting it out. Pupils commented that they noted 'a massive change a couple of years ago' to a focus on healthy living. Playtimes are really energetic because pupils are provided with excellent outdoor adventure equipment which they enjoy to the full. The strong school council with its own budget allows pupils a clear voice through which they set their own priorities. They are rightly proud of the numerous charities they support by raising money for those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils take on many posts of responsibility and these make a significant contribution in building their confidence for the future. Their high level of literacy and numeracy skills, expertise in ICT and good social skills endow them with life skills that will benefit them in the next stage of their education. The liturgical worship that is part of the school's catholicity and the many opportunities pupils have for reflecting on their own and others' experiences greatly enhance their spiritual development. Through their links with other countries and faiths, they build an excellent knowledge and awareness, first hand, of other cultures.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	1
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	3
Pupils' attendance ¹	
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

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

How effective is the provision?

Teachers motivate and interest pupils well in lessons and this is supported by their good subject knowledge. Good use is made of resources, especially interactive whiteboards and laptops and this engages pupils in lessons. Teachers question pupils well, checking their understanding and encouraging them to explain their views. As a result, pupils are confident and articulate and demonstrate well-developed speaking and listening skills. Teaching actively promotes pupils as independent learners and most lessons are carefully planned. Sometimes insufficient attention is paid to designing tasks that meet the different needs and abilities of pupils so that they do not always make the progress of which they are capable. Marking is congratulatory and work is assessed regularly. Good advice for improvement is given in many cases but this varies in quality between classes. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those for whom English is not their first language are well supported by highly skilled teaching assistants.

The curriculum has undergone significant review. It is based upon learning skills across subjects. This approach challenges individuals as well as groups of pupils to progress up the 'skills ladders' as they travel through the school, establishing very good links between subjects, with plenty of opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. Learning through themed weeks such as Science Week, Arts Week and Book Week provides pupils with excellent enrichment alongside a wide range of visits, visitors and partnerships with local schools and international organisations. Art, as confirmed by the school's Bronze Artsmark Award, modern foreign languages and sport are particular strengths. Personal, social and health education is comprehensively covered by the four strands of emotional confidence, active citizens, healthy living and relationships. This makes a significant contribution towards pupils' confidence and attitude to school and life in general, helped by good enrichment through a wide variety of after-school clubs that are well attended.

The school is particularly sensitive in the way that it cares for each individual. Parents show a high level of satisfaction with all safety aspects and safeguarding procedures are carried out diligently and rigorously. Links with outside agencies are good, and vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those for whom English is not their first language are well supported. In the words of one parent: 'I have been very impressed with the way the school has dealt with my child's needs and has kept me fully informed.' The school's rigorous procedures to deal with non-attendance are not yet wholly effective with a few parents.

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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The new headteacher has built an effective senior leadership team and together they are providing good professional development for other leaders and teachers. They are determined to raise the standard of teaching and learning, and strategies implemented thus far are having a successful impact. A few issues remain to ensure that teaching is

consistently good across the school but self-review is thorough and accurate, identifies the correct priorities for further improvement and informs a detailed action plan for the school. Governors know the school well and are involved in its life both at operational and strategic levels on a weekly basis. They are well organised and meet their responsibilities seriously. Taking full advantage of training where appropriate is helping them to monitor the work of the school carefully. They are not afraid to ask challenging questions.

The promotion of community cohesion at school, locally and globally, is strong and fully supported by the Christian ethos that abounds through all the school's work. Mass held in school attended by pupils, staff, governors, parents and other members of the local community draws the whole community together in a very moving way. Pupils' understanding of other faiths and cultures outside the United Kingdom is very good through their contact with such organisations as Cafod and Comenius, but there are fewer opportunities for them to improve their understanding of the cultural diversity that exists within the United Kingdom.

The school has a very wide range of partnerships with other schools and agencies and engages very well with parents. Outcomes for pupils are greatly enhanced by these links that provide extra opportunities and activities, such as visits to schools abroad, sport and modern languages. Promoting equality of different groups of pupils is well managed through careful monitoring and is becoming more effective as provision and outcomes for pupils continue to improve. Leaders do not tolerate any kind of discrimination. The governing body and school staff ensure that safeguarding procedures are rigorous and regular training and monitoring ensures that this high quality is maintained.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2

The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage is a strength of the school. Outstanding teaching, excellent relationships and a safe but stimulating environment, together with the correct balance between adult- and child-chosen activities, enable children to make very good progress. As a result, all reach the goals expected and many exceed them by the end of the Reception Year. The teaching of numeracy and literacy is particularly good. Children's interest was entirely captivated whilst learning their sounds as they used the computer to drive the interactive whiteboard. They learned quickly as they confidently made the actions that matched the sounds. The needs of higher attaining children were very well met as they worked with the teaching assistant to use their sounds to make words.

The curriculum and indoor and outdoor environments are entirely suitable for Reception children. Adults interact very well with children as they learn, asking appropriate questions that facilitate their rapid development. In whatever they are engaged, children behave very well as they share resources whilst learning together. As they build a road with large construction, they warn each other to 'be careful about traffic because of road works!' They are confident and at ease in the surroundings because their independence and personal development is carefully fostered as they choose their tasks and tidy away afterwards. Very good assessment procedures are used to plan the next steps in learning for individual children. This makes a significant contribution to progress. Parents are encouraged to contribute instances of learning at home to each child's Learning Journey.

Reception has excellent links with the private Nursery on site, sharing good practice, learning areas and resources and creating a seamless transition for young children from Nursery to Reception. This very good liaison and induction ensures that both parents and children are very familiar with the Reception class and well supported before starting school. Parents show their appreciation and high regard by making such comments as: 'I'm very impressed with my son's first year at school; he has developed more than I expected. He enjoys going to school and thrives on it.' Children are extremely well cared for and their welfare is paramount; they benefit from drinks and fruit snacks during both the morning and afternoon. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are outstanding.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	1
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

A very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were very supportive of the school. Of the very small number of concerns raised, most were individual issues. A few parents and carers felt that the school did not help them to support their child's learning. However, inspectors found evidence of information and help sent to parents and carers regarding aspects of teaching, especially in mathematics. The school has also run curriculum workshops but attendance was low.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Augustine's Catholic 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 75 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 194 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	57	29	39	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	45	60	29	39	1	1	0	0

My school informs me about my child's progress	28	37	43	57	3	4	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	40	40	53	4	5	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	36	48	38	51	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	29	39	34	45	11	15	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	44	42	56	0	0	0	0
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)	34	45	35	47	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	32	42	56	7	9	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	33	44	34	45	6	8	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	33	42	56	6	8	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	37	49	34	45	0	0	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	40	53	29	39	4	5	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 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	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and 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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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:	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. <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 pupils' 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.



11 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Weymouth DT4 0RH.

Thank you for the very warm and friendly welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently and for spending time talking to us. We really enjoyed meeting you. We found St Augustine's to be a good school that you enjoy school coming to. These are some of the best things we found.

- You enjoy coming to school and you are polite and well behaved. This is helping you to do well and your achievement is outstanding.
- You have a very good understanding of how to stay safe and are very committed to living a healthy lifestyle.
- You enjoy helping in school and get on really well together.
- Your teachers teach you well and make learning fun. You have a good attitude to your work and find your learning really interesting.
- You are well cared for and you told us that you feel very happy and safe in school.

All the adults in your school want you to do your very best. Although they know what needs to be done next, we have asked them to do two things to make learning even better.

- We would like them to improve the quality of teaching and learning so that all of you make more even progress from year to year. We would like them to do this by ensuring that tasks set in lessons are at the correct level for each one of you so that you make the best progress you can and that marking always shows you how to take the next steps in your learning and improve your work.
- We would also like them to work with all of your parents to make sure you come to school as much as possible.

Please keep working hard!

Yours sincerely

Anna Sketchley

Lead inspector

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