

## St Thomas More's Catholic Primary School

### Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116377
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	312281
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 January 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Christopher Grove

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	274
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Tony Dove
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Denise Willis
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 February 2004
<b>School address</b>	Hooks Lane Bedhampton Havant PO9 3DR
<b>Telephone number</b>	02392 475909
<b>Fax number</b>	02392 472050

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<b>Age group</b>	4-11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school serves three large Catholic parishes and is slightly larger than average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of pupils with special education needs is a little below average. Most pupils are of White British heritage, with small numbers from other white and minority ethnic groups. Pupils' mobility is above average. The school has been awarded Sports Active Mark, and has status as an Investor in People and as a Healthy School (enhanced level).

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

St Thomas More Catholic Primary is a satisfactory school with some good features. The majority of parents are very supportive of the school, indicating the good partnership which the school has developed with them. One parent wrote that 'all staff treat the children (and parents) with great respect and courtesy and are very encouraging'. The school works well with parents and other agencies to ensure pupils' well-being. Good links with other schools and organisations are also evident.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils show good spiritual development, with a reverence for life; their moral and social development is also good, which is demonstrated in their behaviour and care for one another. This was well summarised by the parent who referred to 'the calm atmosphere which encourages good behaviour through the school'. Pupils have good relationships with their peers and with adults. They enjoy their education and are keen to learn.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. When children enter the school, their attainment is generally below expectations for their age. They get a good start in the Foundation Stage, and make good progress. Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1, and as a result they have in recent years regularly attained average standards overall by the end of Year 2. At the end of Year 6, standards have also generally been about average over the last five years. Progress at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall, but there are inconsistencies in rates of progress between subjects and year groups.

The teaching is satisfactory. It is good in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, but inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 result in satisfactory progress. Where the teaching is good, there is a clear focus on pupils' learning, with high expectations and effective planning. However, in some lessons the pace of learning is slower. Marking and target-setting are used well in English to inform pupils about what they need to do next to improve their work. By contrast, assessment in science and mathematics is not as effective in guiding pupils to improve their work.

The curriculum is now broad and well planned. There are effective links between subjects, which help pupils to see the relevance of their work. Pupils benefit from the wide range of well-attended extra-curricular activities, and from extended services such as the Breakfast and After School Clubs. They receive good pastoral care and guidance from the staff. The nurture groups give good support to pupils.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The senior leadership has set clear direction in terms of pupils' personal development and well-being, and their pastoral care. Good improvements have been made to the curriculum. Measures to improve pupils' achievement have been more successful at Key Stage 1. Checking activities at Key Stage 2 have not focused sufficiently on pupils' learning and progress. Furthermore, the school's judgements about pupils' outcomes and the quality of provision are not sufficiently robust to provide an accurate self-evaluation. The school's capacity to improve is satisfactory.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Because of good teaching, children make good progress, so that by the time they leave Reception their skills have developed well, but some have not acquired all those expected by this age.

The curriculum is well organised and is designed to help children towards independence. The outdoor space, although small, is used to support all areas of the curriculum and provides good opportunities for social and physical development. Topics are linked to children's own experiences and a range of interesting activities is planned, resulting in stimulating learning. There is a strong focus on the teaching of reading, linking sounds to letters and the development of personal and social skills. The children are therefore well prepared for the transition to the next phase of their learning.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in Key Stage 2, and rigorously monitor its impact on pupils' progress in order to raise pupils' achievement and standards.
- Make better use of information from robust monitoring to improve the accuracy and effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation.
- Improve target-setting, especially in mathematics and science, so that pupils can better understand the next steps in their learning.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

The attainment of pupils when they enter Year 1 is still below expectations for their age, though improving. At the end of Year 2, standards in mathematics have consistently been slightly lower than in reading and writing. In 2007, girls in Year 2 performed slightly better than boys, especially in writing. At the end of Year 6, girls' performance in English in 2007 was distinctly better than that of boys, but in mathematics and science, there was little difference between boys and girls. Although more pupils join and leave the school in Key Stage 2, it is the inconsistency in the quality of teaching rather pupils' mobility which is the major factor in accounting for the slower progress than in Key Stage 1. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make the same satisfactory progress as others.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils develop a good understanding of other cultures through their links with Ecuador, for which they raise money. They warmly welcome children from other countries into their school. They participate well in the school community through the School Council, and older pupils take responsibility as House Captains, Playground Friends and assisting younger pupils in the dining hall. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory, despite the school's efforts to secure improvement. Many pupils have good attendance, but the progress of some is affected by absence on holidays taken during term-time. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles, making good eating choices and taking regular exercise. They feel safe and protected, and develop good self-esteem and confidence through the 'You Can Do It' project. Pupils' future economic well-being is enhanced by their social skills and capability in Information and Communication Technology (ICT), but is limited by satisfactory achievement in literacy and numeracy.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

The different rate of progress in Key Stage 2 results from inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. In the best lessons, pupils show an excitement about learning which results from enthusiastic teaching, rapid pace, varied activities and good use of interactive whiteboards. However, time is sometimes not as well used as it could be. For example, there are instances where pupils spend too long in discussion. Opportunities to investigate or to develop individual work are missed on occasions. Work in pairs or groups, to generate ideas or to vary the focus in lessons, is not as widely used as it could be. Teachers manage classes well and there is good teamwork with teaching assistants. Additional learning needs are well diagnosed and provided for; pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities learn well on specific programmes. Parents and carers are well involved in pupils' numeracy through a number facts log.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The pupils have good opportunities to use their developing skills by writing more extensively in other subjects. ICT is well developed across the curriculum, with pupils receiving good support from a specialist teaching assistant. Pupils enjoy the themed weeks that take place each term. A recent theme celebrating the school's fiftieth anniversary encompassed a range of subjects and encouraged the pupils to reflect on local history. The curriculum is enriched well by trips and by visitors. Pupils enjoy these activities which contribute to the development of their self-esteem. The curriculum is enhanced by the teaching of swimming, and French to all year groups, as well as by sports coaching and specialist music teaching. Pupils often take part in music and drama events in local theatres, and there are good links with the local secondary school, which has Arts College status.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

There are rigorous and very well documented arrangements for safeguarding and child protection. Risk assessments for school trips, and procedures for monitoring health and safety on the school site are robust. There is a good range of healthy eating options, with water and fruit available. The school actively promotes good attendance, working closely with families who need extra support. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are well looked after; they are placed on appropriate programmes and their progress is thoroughly monitored. Individual education plans are relevant, thorough and used well. Challenging targets are set in English which enable pupils to improve. In mathematics and science, this process is only satisfactory because targets are not sufficiently well matched to the learning of individual pupils.

## Leadership and management

#### Grade: 3

The senior leadership observes classroom teaching, and subject leaders scrutinise teachers' planning and analyse pupils' work. However, these activities are not incisive enough to provide

an accurate self evaluation or a detailed picture of precisely where improvements are needed to accelerate progress. The school has a strong commitment to providing equal opportunities, and takes steps to ensure that no groups of pupils are disadvantaged by the school's organisation, or in their access to the curriculum and the premises. Governance is satisfactory. The governors are committed to the school, and fully discharge their legal responsibilities. They provide good support, and show an understanding of the strengths of the school, but are not holding the leadership sufficiently to account for the pupils' progress and achievement. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
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?	2

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

05 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Thomas More's Catholic Primary School, Havant, PO9 3DR

We would like to thank you for your help during the inspection. We enjoyed seeing you at work in your classrooms and talking to you at playtimes and lunchtimes. We think St Thomas More Catholic Primary is a satisfactory school and has some good features. It is a happy place for pupils.

These are the things we most liked about your school.

- You enjoy school, and your behaviour indoors and outdoors is good.
- You have good relationships with the teachers and other adults in your school. They take good care of you, and this helps you to learn.
- Your personal development is good.
- Children in Reception and Key Stage 1 are progressing well in their learning, and pupils in Key Stage 2 are making satisfactory progress.
- The teaching in your school is always satisfactory; when it is good, teachers keep you well involved and expect a lot more of you.
- The teachers have planned the curriculum to make it more interesting and useful for you.
- Your school leaders know how to ensure that you are well looked after.
- Most of your parents are pleased with the school.
- Your school has good relationships with your parents, other schools and the people they ask to come in to help you.

We have asked your teachers to help all of you to go on getting better at literacy, numeracy, and science by:

- thinking even more about your learning when they are teaching you, or when they are checking your progress
- improving how they decide what to do to make sure you make good progress
- improving the way they set targets for you, especially in numeracy and science, so you know what you should be learning next.

We wish you all every success in the future. Thank you again.

Yours faithfully

Chris Grove

Lead Inspector