

St Charles' Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104646
Local Authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	355609
Inspection dates	19–20 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Jane Millward HMI

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 of pupils on the school roll	127
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Rosemary Kay
Headteacher	Mr Chris Davey
Date of previous school inspection	23 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. Eight lessons were observed. All teachers were seen and meetings held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, staff and the local authority. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school development plan, policy documentation, pupils' work, tracking data, plans for the curriculum, notes of visits by the School Improvement Partner, minutes of meetings held by the governing body, attendance data, the single central record of information held on staff, other safeguarding documentation and 63 parent and carers' questionnaires.

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

- How the school has improved outcomes in English and mathematics and how the school ensures no groups of pupils fall behind.
- The effectiveness of leadership and management in improving provision since the last inspection, including how consistent it is across the whole school in all subjects and classes.
- If strategies have halted the decline in English and how the school ensures the more able make sufficient progress.
- How the school supports personal development to ensure pupils achieve as well as they might.

Information about the school

St Charles' Catholic Primary School is a smaller-than-average primary school with higher-than-average numbers of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals. Fewer pupils than average attend the school from minority ethnic groups.

There are fewer pupils with a statement of special educational needs than average, as is the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school experiences high rates of mobility. There is a breakfast club run by the governing body.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

St Charles' Catholic Primary School is a satisfactory school. Strong emphasis is placed on promoting pupils' well-being and on good-quality care, guidance and support. As a result, many aspects of pupils' personal development are good. Pupils behave well, show respect for one another and older pupils take on extra responsibility with maturity and confidence. Attendance is good and the school has effective strategies to promote punctuality for all pupils. Most parents and carers hold the school in high regard and are pleased with the education it provides. Pupils enjoy the experiences that the school provides and enrichment is strong.

Pupils in school make satisfactory progress and by the end of Year 6 attain levels that are broadly average. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make satisfactory progress. However, some more-able pupils do not achieve as well as they might, especially in reading and writing. Teaching is satisfactory and is variable across the school. There are aspects of highly effective provision where pupils are enthused to do well. However, this is not always the case and some lessons are incorrectly pitched due to inconsistencies in the use of assessment and in pupils' understanding of how to improve their work.

The school takes into account the views of parents and carers and acts decisively upon them. Parents and carers feel well supported and positive relationships exist. Effective links with external agencies ensure vulnerable learners' needs are met well.

The headteacher is tackling the school's weaknesses with drive and determination to improve outcomes. An improved system to monitor the progress of each pupil has been introduced and evaluation procedures to monitor the impact of the work are becoming more refined. The school acknowledges more work is required to improve these systems. Self-evaluation is accurate and monitoring is beginning to be used well to direct and assure improvement. This provides the school with a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and rates of progress in English and mathematics by:
 - ensuring the more able pupils are challenged in all lessons
 - ensuring marking is consistent in all subjects and across all classes so that pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve.

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- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to be at least good by:
 - using assessment information to plan activities that are precisely tailored to match pupils' needs
 - sharing the good-quality teaching provision throughout the school.
- Further develop and embed the rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures by:
 - evaluating effectively the impact of actions taken
 - ensuring monitoring is sharply focused and that findings are further translated into appropriate actions to bring about consequent improvements.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils are well motivated and enjoy coming to school. They actively take part in lessons and talk with enthusiasm about their learning along with all aspects of school life. They respond confidently to questioning in lessons and are keen to do well. Knowledge and skills vary when children enter school but overall are generally in line with age-related expectations. By the end of Year 2, attainment is broadly average although with fewer pupils achieving the higher levels. Attainment levels at the end of Year 6 have improved in the last year in mathematics as this has been a focus area for the school. Attainment in English has declined over the past three years and is below what is expected nationally. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals achieve well although those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities generally achieve less well when compared to national expectations. The school acknowledge that there is still work to be done to raise attainment higher. The rate of pupils' progress is satisfactory overall with evidence to show improved rates of progress in mathematics from the previous year.

Pupils say they feel safe and enjoy school. They know who to turn to if they have a problem and know that issues will be resolved by a caring and responsive team. Behaviour is good, pupils show respect for each other and listen and value opinions from their peers. Pupils speak enthusiastically about a range of opportunities they have to develop their skills, particularly in sport and music. There is good understanding by pupils of all ages of how to lead healthy lifestyles and good participation rates of extra-curricular clubs ensures pupils' well-being is developed effectively. Pupils are keen to take on responsibility in the school community, for example, as school councillors and class prefects. They make an effective contribution to the school and local community, for example, raising money for the local 'Liverpool Food Bank' appeal. Pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is good overall and is underpinned by the school's mission statement, and the 'Catholic Life of School' committee who meet to develop such aspects of school life. Due to above-average attendance, curricular links to local industry and satisfactory achievement, pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the next phase of their education.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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?

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with some variability in quality across classes. Teachers are refining methods of using information on pupils' progress to plan activities which meet the needs of all learners but these remain in the developmental stage. The school has worked closely with the local authority to support and develop aspects of teaching and learning and as a result, lessons are generally engaging and support progress. Targets are in place for all learners which are shared with pupils, parents and carers. In the most effective lessons, teachers match work to the needs of pupils and high expectations prevail. Pupils are keen to complete their work and enjoy their learning. Where lessons are less successful, the work is wrongly pitched and pupils make less progress. Time is wasted which slows the pace of the lesson which has an adverse impact on what learners achieve. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. There are examples of effective marking where pupils are guided in how to improve and which affirms the efforts of the pupils. However, there are instances where some books remain unmarked or marking does not guide pupils sufficiently well to their next steps in learning.

The headteacher and staff have developed a cross-curricular approach to lessons, and visitors and trips enrich the curriculum well. Pupils' views were sought prior to implementation of the curriculum and they speak enthusiastically about what they are learning. Links to local special schools enrich the curriculum and ensure effective support

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for vulnerable learners to access the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to participate in a wide range of sporting activities, such as judo, tag rugby and cross-country running.

Pupils are treated with respect and sensitivity, helping them to grow in confidence. The pastoral needs of each pupil, including those most vulnerable and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well known to the school. Staff work effectively with families and other professionals, and both parents and carers and pupils recognise that their personal development and well-being are given high priority by the school. The breakfast club which was introduced due to parental requests provides a safe and enjoyable start to the day for the few pupils who attend.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides a strong sense of purpose for the school. His vision of raising achievement of all groups of pupils, while embracing families and the community, is shared by the whole school. He has implemented systems and procedures to track the progress of all learners and as a result, teachers are more aware of current attainment levels and hence are in a better position to intervene when pupils start to fall behind. However, as these are in the developmental stage it remains difficult to measure the impact of this work fully. The senior leaders have an accurate understanding of strengths and weaknesses and are beginning to develop robust procedures with a determination to improve outcomes for pupils. To ensure that all teachers help pupils achieve their full potential, a useful programme of meetings between the headteacher and each teacher has been introduced. Teachers complete termly cohort reports where the progress of all pupils is discussed and interventions implemented where required. Teaching and learning are monitored through lesson observations and scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' books. However, the response to identified weaknesses is not yet fully in place. The school is in the early stages of sharing good practice and identifying the characteristics of more effective lessons. Leaders in school are aware of the need to refine developments and challenge where it is most needed.

The governing body is satisfactory and takes a keen interest in school developments. It provides support and challenge and is aware of the need to raise attainment. Individual governors bring a wide range of expertise to the school.

The school fulfils its statutory responsibilities for the safeguarding and protection of pupils. Leaders monitor and promote the equality of opportunity for all pupils. As a result, some actions have been taken to ensure all groups achieve equally well. For example, topics have been introduced to motivate boys' writing. There are strong links with parents and

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carers and the school seeks their views and acts accordingly, for example, the implementation of family internet and email training. Leaders and managers at all levels promote partnership working and links with agencies are strong which support pupils' well-being and learning. Pupils are keen to engage with a range of communities and support those who are less fortunate. However, the school has yet to complete a full audit of the way in which it contributes to community cohesion, the provision for which is currently satisfactory.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Most children, given their variable starting points, make good progress during the Early Year Foundation Stage. They get off to a good start as the quality of provision is good and staff know the children well. Children quickly settle into routines and school procedures are well known by all children. Personal development is strong and children are encouraged to share and take turns. They play well both in groups and individually and are curious and inquisitive. Generally, children display good behaviour and they know how to keep safe. They demonstrate an effective awareness of healthy living, for example, a group of children were sorting food into healthy and unhealthy categories and commented that 'too much sugar is bad for you.' Children are able to make choices and will share responsibility. Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is much improved since the least inspection. Enhanced resources and a welcoming learning environment both inside and outdoors, support the good teaching and learning. A good mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities promote learning and personal development. Planned observations inform detailed assessments for all children and links with parents and carers are strong. All statutory and welfare requirements are in place. Self-evaluation is accurate and as a result leaders implement changes through a rich and varied curriculum to ensure any areas of weakness are quickly addressed.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	2
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The great majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaire are fully supportive of the school. Almost all consider that the school keeps their children safe and were confident that their children enjoy school. They are pleased with the way the school is led and managed. One written comment summarised the view of many, 'My child really enjoys her school experience. I feel confident that she is getting the very best support and experience.' Parents and carers who spoke to the inspectors were pleased with open lines of communication and felt they were well informed with the progress of their children.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Charles' 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 63 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 127 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	70	15	24	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	49	78	13	21	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	38	60	23	37	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	38	60	18	29	4	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	42	67	19	30	1	2	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	43	68	20	32	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	59	23	37	1	2	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)	33	52	24	38	1	2	2	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	37	59	24	38	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	33	52	23	37	1	2	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	49	26	41	4	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	34	54	27	43	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	43	68	16	25	3	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 2009 to 31 August 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 2009/10 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:	<p>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.</p> <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.



21 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Charles' Catholic Primary School, Liverpool, L17 7JA

On behalf of the inspection team I would like to thank you for the friendly welcome you gave us when we inspected your school recently. As you know we came to see how well you were doing and what you said helped us with our findings.

Yours is a satisfactory school providing you with a satisfactory education. You make satisfactory progress and enjoy your learning. You are keen to do well and actively take part in lessons. You told us you feel safe in school and you know about keeping healthy. We were very impressed with your good behaviour and how you respect each other. You enjoy the extra-curricular activities that school provides and you work hard to develop your local community and help those who are less fortunate. All the staff take good care of you. They know each and every one of you well and they support you with your work and help sort out any worries you have.

It is my job to find out how schools can do even better. We have asked your school to improve the standards you reach in English and mathematics and to make sure you make even more progress. We want your school to improve the quality of teaching so that you achieve your full potential in all your lessons. Also, we want the school to make sure the plans they have to improve the school are clearly focused on the right areas so improvements can be seen.

Thank you again for your very warm welcome and enjoy your learning.

Yours sincerely

Jane Millward

Her Majesty's Inspector

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