

# St Catherine's RC Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119585
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	339475
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 October 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kathleen McArthur

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>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	225
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Anthony Burscough
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Christopher Dunne
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 March 2007
<b>School address</b>	Moss Lane Leyland Lancashire PR25 4SJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01772 423767
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<b>Email address</b>	head@st-catherines.lancs.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 12 lessons taught by 10 teachers and teaching assistants, and held meetings with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, staff and representatives of the local authority. They observed the school's work and looked at school documentation including policies, safeguarding arrangements, school and national attainment and progress data, pupils' work and school development planning. Questionnaires from pupils, staff and the 44 returned by parents and carers were also scrutinised.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- The impact of the school's actions to accelerate progress and raise attainment in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Whether the quality of teaching is sufficiently strong and consistent.
- Curriculum planning and its impact on motivating pupils and boosting their achievement.
- How school leaders at all levels contribute to the drive for improvement.

## Information about the school

This average sized primary school draws pupils from a wide area. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is low. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The school is an Investor in People and has Healthy School status. Significant staffing changes since the previous inspection include the appointment of a new deputy headteacher in September 2009.

St Catherine's Independent Nursery and Out of School club operate in the school building. They receive separate inspections and the reports are available on the Ofsted website.

**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 Catherine's Roman Catholic Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The school is a happy, harmonious community where good care, guidance and support ensure that pupils feel very safe and secure. The Early Years Foundation Stage gives children a good start to their school careers. Attendance is high, pupils say they enjoy school and all parents and carers who returned the questionnaires agree with this. Value for money is satisfactory.

When children enter the school, their skills are below those typical for their age. Achievement is satisfactory and attainment is broadly average. Children progress well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and satisfactorily in Key Stages 1 and 2 where a period of staffing change adversely affected standards and progress. Rigorous actions in partnership with the local authority are becoming effective and standards and progress are improving as a result. Pupils have good oral and reading skills, but writing skills are weaker, particularly at the higher levels. Many pupils struggle with mathematical calculation. Good provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities enables them to progress well in relation to their starting points.

Teaching is satisfactory, and an increasing proportion is good, but inconsistencies remain. Assessment systems provide a clear picture of progress and pupils are now involved in assessing how well they are doing. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements and is enriched with popular visits and clubs, but it does not fully build on pupils' interests to boost their involvement in learning and thus accelerate progress. Good behaviour and enjoyment of school make a positive contribution to learning and pupils have a good regard for their own safety and health. One spoke for many with the words 'We all look after each other' and older pupils happily care for younger ones at playtimes. Good promotion of equal opportunities means that all pupils are fully included in all activities. Pupils are keen to contribute to the community but have limited knowledge of different communities and lifestyles beyond their locality.

Honest and accurate school self-evaluation gives senior leaders and governors an accurate overview of what needs to be done to raise standards and to boost progress. Their clear vision for improvement is demonstrated in challenging targets and rigorous action plans. Although these are making an impact, for example, in increasing the proportion of good teaching, leaders acknowledge that the rate of improvement has been too slow. Subject leaders have yet to develop the full range of skills needed to contribute to school improvement. Capacity for further improvement is satisfactory.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress and raise standards in Key Stages 1 and 2, by:

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- enabling pupils to use more imaginative ideas and wider vocabulary choices in their writing, particularly at higher levels
- developing the skills pupils need to solve mathematical problems
- enhancing the creative aspects of the curriculum to build more closely on pupils' skills and interests and thus engage them more fully in their learning.
- Build on the best practice found in the school to raise the overall quality of teaching and learning from satisfactory to at least good, by:
  - ensuring the consistent use of assessment information to match work more closely to pupils' individual needs
  - improving the use of time so lessons move along at a good pace and pupils have sufficient time to practice and reinforce what they have learnt
  - using success criteria effectively so that pupils know what is expected of them
  - ensuring that teaching assistants are always used to support learning in whole-class sessions.
- Extend the promotion of community cohesion by broadening pupils' knowledge and understanding of other communities and lifestyles, both nationally and in the wider world.
- 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.

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

Good relationships abound throughout the school. Pupils behave well and work cooperatively with staff and their classmates and comment, 'We are working hard on improving our presentation'. They say they enjoy lessons, know they are expected to work hard and several suggested they would like more mathematics lessons. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. However, inspection evidence, including lesson observations and the pupils' work, show that progress slows to satisfactory for other pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2. Strategies to overcome this are gradually becoming more effective and faster progress is found in lessons where teaching is good. Attainment is slowly beginning to improve and pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 are on track to meet their challenging targets. Over time, girls have often outperformed boys, particularly in writing. The introduction of 'boy friendly' materials and teaching styles to meet their learning needs is helping to close this gap. Not enough pupils reach higher levels in writing because they often lack imaginative ideas or a sufficiently wide range of vocabulary.

Pupils are polite, eager to help and welcoming to visitors and describe the school as 'friendly'. They know how to keep fit through diet and exercise and participate enthusiastically in the many sports and physical activities offered to them. They talk enthusiastically about designing and preparing a healthy menu during 'Health Week.' Pupils have a strong moral sense of right and wrong and a firm understanding of the need for school rules, which they regard as fair. Behaviour is good overall, although some pupils think it could be better. Bullying is not seen as a problem and pupils trust the staff to sort out any issues. The school council represents pupils well and successfully negotiated

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improvements to the toilets and playground. Attendance is consistently high. Pupils have good social and broadly average academic skills which provide a satisfactory basis for the future. However, they have limited experience of other cultures and lifestyles to prepare them for life in a multi-cultural society.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

<sup>1</sup> 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?**

Pupils believe their teachers are 'fair' and that sometimes lessons are fun. Monitoring by leaders and inspection observations show that an increasing proportion of teaching is good, but also that inconsistencies remain. Consequently, overall achievement is not as good as it could be. Lessons are usually well-planned with a range of resources, including information and communication technology (ICT). Assessment information gives a sound picture of progress, so that additional help can be directed where needed. However, the use of this information in planning tasks to meet and challenge individual needs is not fully embedded in some classes. In the best lessons, teaching assistants are well deployed and pupils have plenty of time to practise and reinforce newly-learned skills and concepts. These good practices are not consistently implemented in all classes where teachers sometimes talk for too long and do not fully use the skills of the teaching assistants in whole-class sessions. Pupils say teachers' marking helps improve their work; they also assess their own progress towards the targets in their books and find the 'Think, say, write and read' system useful.

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The curriculum has focused appropriately on the core subjects of literacy, numeracy and science in response to a dip in standards. Adaptations are in place, for example, for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities but these are not consistently implemented for all pupils. Work has begun to link subjects through a more creative approach that builds on pupils' interests and skills, but it is too early to gauge its full impact on accelerating progress and raising standards. The good range of enrichment activities includes specialist French teaching and themed weeks, such as an anti-bullying week and also a 'Wow Week' featuring Chinese dancers. The well-attended clubs include sports, arts and drama, and the school sensitively targets individual pupils who would benefit from involvement in particular activities.

The school is a welcoming learning environment where good quality care, guidance and support make a strong contribution to pupils' confidence and well-being. A particular strength is the well-targeted provision for vulnerable pupils. A good range of intervention strategies and well-organised, skilled support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities ensure they make good progress. Effective transition arrangements within the school and with the high schools ensure that pupils move happily and with confidence to the next stage of their education. The school carefully monitors attendance patterns to identify and eradicate any persistent absence or lateness.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Outcomes of senior leaders' rigorous and regular monitoring of teaching and learning are fed back to staff and challenging targets for improvement are linked to performance management targets. These procedures have led to an increasing proportion of good teaching, but their impact is at an early stage. Similarly the role of subject leadership is not fully developed in the drive to boost attainment and progress. The governing body is involved in school life and aware of areas for improvement. It receives regular curriculum and finance updates and is becoming increasingly confident in holding the school to account for pupils' progress.

Good relationships with parents and carers benefit pupils. The school gathers their views through surveys and a focus group that considers aspects of school, such as reports; there is also a flourishing parent/teacher association. Partnerships bring additional opportunities for pupils, such as sports, and the link with the local authority is proving particularly valuable in the drive for improvement. The school's good promotion of equal opportunities ensures there is no discrimination and that all pupils can participate in everything the school offers. The school is quickly closing the gap in attainment between girls and boys.

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Safeguarding and child protection have a high profile in the school, meet statutory requirements, and policies and training are up-to-date. Pupils are well aware of security arrangements, for example, that visitors must wear badges, and consequently they feel safe. The action plan for community cohesion includes well established links with other schools and religious organisations. However, plans for national and global links to promote further understanding are not fully in place.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Most children enter with skills below those typical for their age, particularly in language and communication. They make good progress in all areas of learning, although staff recognise the need to provide more opportunities to boost calculation skills. Good teaching in the welcoming, safe and friendly environment ensures that children settle quickly and feel very secure and ready to learn.

The carefully planned range of activities led by staff or chosen by the children, builds on their natural curiosity and meets their needs well. Consequently, they behave well, grow in confidence, become increasingly independent and happily follow class routines. For example, they willingly tidy up and are keen to help give out morning snacks and milk. Children understand the importance of caring for themselves and washing their hands. They love working in the well-equipped outdoor area, where a lively hunting game ensures they progress well in their knowledge of colours and shapes. However, children from the mixed Reception/Year 1 class have limited access to this area. Language skills develop rapidly because staff take every opportunity to encourage children to discuss their activities, for example, comparing the smell and texture of different fruit and vegetables. Children enjoy the regular sounds and letters sessions that prepare them for reading and writing and they listen carefully to their favourite stories.



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Good leadership by the Early Years Foundation Stage manager is building a strong staff team. Children's progress is carefully assessed to direct help or provide extra challenge where needed. Introductory sessions for parents, carers and children ensure a smooth transition from pre-school settings, including the on-site private nursery. There are regular consultation meetings and the home-school books are much appreciated. When children move to Year 1, the majority are working at, and some exceed, the expected levels for their age.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
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

A lower than average number, about 20%, of parents and carers returned the questionnaires. Most responses were very positive. All said their children enjoy school and that the school helps them have a healthy lifestyle. The majority feel the school takes account of their suggestions and keeps their children safe. A very small proportion feels their child is not making enough progress. A few are of the opinion that unacceptable behaviour is not dealt with effectively and also that children are not prepared well enough for the future. Inspectors found that pupils are making satisfactory progress and actions to boost this are beginning to take effect. Good behaviour was observed and pupils trust the staff to deal with any problems. The inspection team judges that the school has satisfactory arrangements in place to prepare pupils for the future.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Catherine's RC 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 44 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 225 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	28	64	16	36	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	32	73	8	18	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	24	55	16	36	4	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	50	11	25	5	11	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	27	61	13	30	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	57	14	32	3	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	24	55	20	45	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)	22	50	16	36	3	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	30	68	10	23	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	52	14	32	3	7	2	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	59	16	36	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	26	59	15	34	0	0	2	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	29	66	12	27	1	2	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## 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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



20 October 2010

Dear Pupils,

**Inspection of St Catherine's RC Primary School, Leyland, PR25 4SJ**

On behalf of the inspectors, I would like to thank you for your help when we inspected your school. We enjoyed meeting friendly, polite children who were keen to talk to us. A special 'thank you' goes to those who gave up their lunchtime to meet with the inspectors. You told us you enjoy school and your parents and carers agree. We know many of you attend the different clubs and you certainly seemed to enjoy watching and joining in with the Chinese dancers who came as part of your 'Wow' week!

This letter is to tell you what we found.

Your school provides you with a satisfactory education. The Early Years Foundation Stage gives you a good start. You behave well, told us you feel safe in school and we know you try hard to help others. The leaders make sure you are well cared for.

You reach the right standards for your age but we think you can make faster progress and do even better so we have asked the school leaders to:

- help you gain a wider vocabulary to improve your writing,
- make sure you know how to tackle mathematical problems more effectively and provide a more exciting curriculum to meet your interests
- make sure you are always taught well, use success criteria, and that you have enough time in lessons to practise what you have learnt
- widen your knowledge of different lifestyles and cultures in Britain and in the wider world.

I am sure you will be keen to help them. We send our best wishes to you all.

Yours sincerely

Kathleen McArthur

Lead Inspector

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