

St John the Baptist Roman Catholic Primary School, Padiham

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119648
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	339492
Inspection dates	8–9 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Marie Cordey

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	242
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Michael Schofield
Headteacher	Mrs Kathleen McKeating
Date of previous school inspection	5 October 2006
School address	St John's Road Padiham, Burnley Lancashire BB12 7BN
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 15 lessons and observed 11 teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including the school's self-evaluation evidence, the school improvement plan, safeguarding documentation, internal and external monitoring of the school and 153 returned questionnaires from parents and carers, and returned questionnaires from pupils and staff.

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

- The quality and effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage, especially children's involvement and participation in all areas of learning.
- Pupils' attainment and progress, especially for boys in English and for all pupils in mathematics.
- The effectiveness of teachers' planning in engaging and challenging all pupils.

Information about the school

The school is of average size. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The vast majority of pupils are White British. There are no pupils who are at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. There have been some staff changes in the Early Years Foundation Stage but staffing is now more stable. The school has achieved Healthy School status and the Activemark for its work in physical activity. It provides extended services including a toddler group. This is managed and run by the governing body. At the time of the inspection the headteacher had been in post for seven weeks.

Before and after school care are located at the school but are not managed by the governing body and did not form part of this inspection. A separate inspection report for this provision is 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. Pupils thrive, both academically and personally, because of the good teaching and outstanding care, guidance and support they receive. This is highlighted in the remarkable and touching care of 'seeds' in the Reception class by 'gardeners' from Year 6. A Year 6 pupil wrote in a newspaper style report, 'Seeds blossom in the care of the gardeners.' Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They are proud and eager when making outstanding contributions to the local community, which values the school highly. Pupils are keenly aware of the importance of adopting healthy lifestyles through their diet and physical activity. The very effective sports partnership reflects the excellent use that is made of a wide range of groups to further pupils' learning and personal development. Pupils relish school life and their attendance is high. Above average attainment, high aspirations and exceptional preparation for the next stage in their education, prepare pupils exceedingly well for their future.

Pupils at the end of Year 6, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the more able, make good progress from their average starting points in Year 1. This is because, overall, leaders and governors drive improvement well, involving all staff in a clear commitment to making a difference to pupils' lives. The quality of teaching is good. Pupils' learning is well developed through teachers' effective planning to match the interests and abilities of individual pupils and their strong subject knowledge. Occasionally, teachers speak for too long and the pace of the lesson slows. Consequently, there are fewer opportunities for pupils to become involved and active in their learning.

The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Following a period of some staffing turbulence, the setting is beginning to plan more effectively to engage and involve children in play and learning. Children settle happily because of the care taken to introduce them to school life. Nevertheless, the range of activities is lacking in opportunities to encourage children's curiosity and independence because the balance of child- and adult-led activities is weighted towards adults' contributions. Leaders accurately identify the need to encourage and develop children's skills further and have planned a rigorous programme of improvements.

The school is led and managed well by committed and determined staff and governors. Improvements in attainment in mathematics and for the more-able pupils since the previous inspection support good capacity to make further improvements. Leaders rigorously analyse their performance and self-evaluation is accurate. They understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school well.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage by:

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- planning more effectively to engage and involve children in play and learning
- broadening and increasing children's participation and involvement in all areas of learning to encourage their curiosity and develop their independence.
- Raise attainment further by:
 - reducing teachers' input in lessons and involving pupils more directly and actively in their learning
 - ensuring that there is sufficient pace and range of activities to stimulate pupils' interest and engagement in the lessons.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils achieve well and enjoy their learning. Their experiences and knowledge bring learning to life; for example, those with relatives who fought in the Second World War provided interesting accounts for their classmates. They enjoy being involved and learn best when they can apply their knowledge in practical situations. For instance, pupils in a Year 2 lesson used clothes pegs and coat hangers to help learn their times tables and to group numbers in sets. Boys' writing has improved significantly because of the increased use of information and communication technology. More emphasis on real-life experiences and a broader range of stimulating texts enthuse boys and help them to learn more.

Pupils' starting points in Year 1 have been average but are now below average, reflecting their level of skills at the end of their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils make good gains in their learning because their individual needs and capabilities are quickly and rigorously identified. Consequently, lesson planning takes account of pupils' previous learning and they are suitably supported and challenged. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported by efficient and knowledgeable teaching assistants. They are helped to be more effective by sharing planning with the class teacher who closely directs their contributions. The more-able pupils are challenged to extend their knowledge and understanding by more thought-provoking extension activities. Pupils feel safe and cared for; they appreciate the chance to raise concerns by using 'worry boxes' and say incidents of concern to them are rare. Many frequently refer to the school's mission statement to, 'Love one another' because 'This is what happens.' Parish links are a cornerstone of pupils' work in the community through regular church services, charity fund-raising and helping elderly residents. Pupils feel their views are important because they are listened to with respect. They behave well and some exemplary behaviour was observed, such as in assembly and in the welcome extended to inspectors. The 'Golden Book' is very effective in promoting good behaviour and is valued by pupils. It is only in lessons when their teachers speak for too long that pupils become a little restless. Nevertheless, pupils feel that they have a clear responsibility to themselves and others and have a clear understanding of right and wrong. Their firm moral values are a reflection of the excellent spiritual character of the school.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
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	2
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	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	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?

The majority of teaching is good and in some lessons it is outstanding. It is best when pupils are encouraged to be involved and reflective such as when they write from the perspective of an evacuee in the Second World War. A thematic approach to planning provides a range of successful opportunities for hands on learning, such as in the Second World War victory party and associated cooking, particularly the very tasty potato piglets! High expectations develop pupils' aspirations and commitment to learning. Teaching is less effective when planning is not as precisely focused on individual learning and occasionally, a small number of pupils are not precisely sure what to do or how to develop their work. Pupils' work is marked diligently and most pupils are aware of what they need to do in order to make the next steps in their learning.

The curriculum is rich and vibrant especially in its development of speaking and listening, writing and the use of information and communication technology across subjects. The 'Talking Books', produced by pupils, are a celebration of evocative and inspiring writing and speaking. A wide range of visits and after-school activities are planned to engage and extend pupils' learning and these are much appreciated by parents, carers and pupils alike. Similarly, the before- and after-school provision is managed well and welcomed by parents and carers. In some lessons there is an insufficient range of activities to sustain pupils' interest and full engagement.

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Pupils' work is valued and wall displays demonstrate the pride that the school takes in pupils' work and achievements. All staff are committed to meeting the needs of individual pupils and their families. They are passionate in providing opportunities to ensure that pupils are carefully included in all aspects of school life, especially the most vulnerable. Partnerships with external agencies are a significant strength. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well through considered care plans and individual support. This is supplemented by the provision of speech and language therapists and specialist learning support from the local authority.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The new headteacher has blended well with the senior leadership team, staff and governors. She is respected and appreciated by pupils and their parents and carers. Leaders and governors share a firm and unequivocal commitment to pupils' personal and academic development. This is shared by all staff who are clearly focused on school improvement. The governing body is very involved in school life and challenges the school's performance: this is evident in their understanding of the need to improve the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage, following detailed discussions and evaluation with school leaders. Through a long period of building renovations they have shrewdly managed finances. Parents and carers are listened to and respected. They are very positive about the school's effectiveness and leaders are increasingly involving them more in their child's learning, at home and in school. Requirements to safeguard pupils are fully met and the school acted quickly during the inspection to bolster security relating to building works in response to inspectors' minor concerns.

The promotion of equality of opportunity is at the heart of the school's character and pupils achieve well. Gaps in the performance of boys in English are narrowing thanks to a rigorous focus and effective planning. This is because leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses based on regular and critical evaluations and monitoring of pupils' attainment and well-being. Community cohesion is promoted well, such as in local bulb planting, the Greenway project to provide a footpath and very effective links with Burnley Football Club. Global promotion of the community is celebrated and the school has bought goats and a pump for a well in Sudan. The school has appropriately identified the need to promote further understanding of our multicultural community and has planned to link with schools whose populations are more diverse.

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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	3
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

Children start school with skills that vary but are now typically below those expected for their age. At the end of the Reception Year, although most children's skills are below expectation in all areas of learning, they make satisfactory progress. This contrasts with the situation for older pupils who started and completed the Early Years Foundation Stage with higher levels of skills. Parents and carers appreciate their positive relationships with staff in the setting. Children are well prepared for school, although a very small number of children find it difficult to settle because, sometimes, there are not enough planned opportunities for them to be actively involved.

An adequate range of prepared activities encourages children to enjoy their learning. Satisfactory teaching overall ensures that children become aware of counting, begin to link sounds and letters and learn through play. There are missed opportunities to plan activities indoors and outdoors to develop children's independence and their physical development. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader is committed to motivating all staff in the setting and providing clear planning and systems for engaging children's interests and desire for learning. Requirements for their safety, health and welfare are fully met. Attainment is lower now than it has been because children's starting points are now lower.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Almost two thirds of parents and carers responded through the completed questionnaires. Of these, the vast majority were happy with the school's provision and indicated that their child enjoyed school. The parents and carers also agreed that teaching and behaviour are good. There was a very small number of parents and carers who had concerns about behaviour. Inspectors examined behaviour in class and around the school, held discussions with staff and pupils and looked at behavioural records. The school has planned further opportunities for parents and carers to be involved in their child's learning.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St John the Baptist Roman Catholic Primary School, Padiham 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 153 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 242 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	115	75	37	24	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	120	78	33	22	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	87	57	62	41	2	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	92	60	55	36	4	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	114	75	36	24	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	102	67	45	29	3	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	93	61	59	39	1	1	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)	91	59	56	37	2	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	89	58	58	38	4	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	100	65	46	30	1	1	3	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	82	54	63	41	2	1	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	87	57	63	41	1	1	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	106	69	45	29	0	0	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	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). 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"> ■ 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.



10 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St John the Baptist Roman Catholic Primary School, Padiham, Burnley BB12 7BN

It was delightful to visit your school. The inspection team thoroughly enjoyed talking to you and listened carefully to what you had to say. You told us how much you enjoy school life. Yours is a good school. It is excellent in some areas. The Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. You are well behaved, very polite and welcoming. You were keen to speak to us and look after us. Your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. This is based on your care for people as individuals, your 'love of one another', your enthusiasm for learning and your sense of right and wrong. You are all unique and special. Well done to each one of you!

You help and care for each other. The 'gardeners' look after their 'seeds' exceptionally well. Younger children settle down in the Nursery and Reception classes and you make sure that older pupils look after the younger ones. You particularly enjoy making your excellent contributions to the school and your local community through all the jobs you do and by your work with elderly local people and your bulb planting in the local area.

You make good progress. We would like you to improve your work even more. We have asked your school to support you by providing more activities to make sure that you are active and involved in your learning. We have also asked your headteacher and staff to encourage children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to be more independent and to provide more opportunities for them to play and learn from lots of different experiences. You can all help by continuing to do the best work you can.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Marie Cordey

Lead inspector

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