

Anderton St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119668
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	339498
Inspection dates	22–23 November 2010
Reporting inspector	John Heap

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	161
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Bernard Hayes
Headteacher	Mrs Marie-Therese Bamber
Date of previous school inspection	25 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Twelve lessons were observed and seven teachers seen. Meetings were held with parents and carers, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the improvement plans; reports from the local authority; minutes of the governing body meetings. The inspectors also took into account the responses to the 72 parental questionnaires that were returned and those returned by pupils and staff.

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

- The achievement of the highest attaining pupils in both key stages to determine whether teaching and learning is sufficiently challenging.
- Whether there are any gaps in the progress made by different ages or groups of pupils.
- How well writing and mathematical skills are used and developed across the curriculum.
- The quality and impact of the school's work with families and outside agencies.
- How well subject leaders and the governing body monitor and evaluate the work of the school.

Information about the school

This below average-sized primary school serves a predominantly White British population and small numbers of pupils from other minority ethnic heritages. None of the minority groups are at the early stages of learning English. A very small number of pupils are looked after by the local authority. Few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The school has several awards, including Healthy School status; Activemark and Eco-mark Silver.

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 that provides good value for money. The outstanding features of this highly caring school include: pupils' achievement and very well developed skills; their excellent levels of knowledge about keeping healthy and safe and their high attendance. Pupils and parents are mostly very satisfied with the school's work and a typical parental view is 'St Joseph's is a friendly and welcoming school. It has a good standard of teaching.'

Children enter reception with skills and abilities that are broadly typical for their age. They generally progress well, with good gains in personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy. Although there are strengths in the teaching, curriculum and care, the overall provision and leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. This is because there are shortcomings in the use of assessment information to guide teaching and in the outdoor curriculum provided for these young children.

As children leave reception, their skills and abilities are often a little above average for their age. Attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 is high and the progress pupils make is good. End of Key Stage 2 national test results in 2010 were particularly strong for the highest attaining pupils in reading and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those from minority ethnic backgrounds and the very few looked after by the local authority also make good progress. The modified programmes for these pupils are well taught and effective.

The good quality teaching and curriculum are appreciated by the pupils and ensure that the learning and progress are good, overall. The rate of progress is a little uneven because there are inconsistencies in the way that assessment information is used to fully challenge all of the pupils. In particular, these inconsistencies are seen in the variable ways that learning targets are set for pupils and the way that marking does not always give a clear picture of achievement and areas to improve.

Through good self-evaluation and commitment to the school, senior leaders have a thorough knowledge of its strengths and areas for development. The school employs a wide range of effective procedures to gather views from all stakeholders and there is plenty of evidence that their comments are taken into account. Consequently, the capacity for sustained improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve provision and leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:

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- ensuring that the method of judging attainment on entry is accurate and consistent
- developing assessment tools and timetable for all areas of learning
- providing resources for the outdoor area that are as practical, varied and stimulating as those found indoors.
- Improve the quality of marking and feedback by:
 - instituting a consistent approach to target-setting
 - ensuring that marking gives the pupils a clear picture of their achievements in relation to the targets and what they need to do to improve further.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils are well motivated to learn and make a full contribution in lessons. Pupils collaborate well with their peers and adults and the relationships formed augment the opportunities for good learning. Pupils' outstanding achievement is enhanced by the way they develop strong independent learning skills, such as organising significant levels of fundraising and taking part in enterprise activities. These skills also prepare them extremely well for future schooling and beyond. They concentrate for long periods, which is just as well in some lessons because they have to listen for longer periods than is helpful.

In general, pupils make good progress because the expectations on them are suitably high; in most cases, work is challenging and the pupils with additional needs are supported well. The rate of progress over time can be a little inconsistent because there are variations in the amounts of work done and the challenge is not always sharply enough identified. This means that in some areas the pupils have gaps in their learning. This was seen in a mathematics lesson, where a minority of pupils lacked the ability to make sensible estimations and, therefore, found it difficult to check their answers.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Consequently, strengths include: good behaviour in lessons and around the school; pupils get on well with one another and are sensitive to the needs of others; pupils know and understand the traditions and cultures of people from other heritages. Pupils say that they are safe in school and that bullying is not something they have to face. The rare instances of inappropriate behaviour are, they say, dealt with promptly and effectively. Pupils mostly show very positive attitudes to work and school and are emphatic that they enjoy coming to school. Older pupils act as good role models for younger ones and enjoy taking responsibilities, such as, helping in the office and being prefects and playground buddies. They relish these opportunities to act responsibly and show that they are trustworthy.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
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	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?

Overall, the good teaching and learning effectively promotes strong academic progress. During the inspection, there was a mix of good and satisfactory lessons. In the best lessons, good management leads to challenging work and very few disruptions to learning. Teachers' good knowledge and understanding promote the strong development of pupils' basic academic skills. Invariably, there are good relationships developed between staff and pupils and this fosters confidence in pupils. Overall, the use of assessment information is good, but there are inconsistencies across classes and this leads to some lessons: lacking high levels of challenge for all pupils and some pupils not receiving the academic guidance they need. For example, variability in the quality of marking means that not all pupils are as clear as they could be about their achievements and what they need to do to improve further.

The continually developing curriculum promotes personal and academic development well. In particular, teachers are guided well to provide learning opportunities that are matched ever more precisely to the individual needs of pupils. An example of this is the effective way that the reading programme is modified and taught to pupils who find reading difficult. Pupils are helped to develop good basic skills in numeracy, reading and writing. However, in some classes, opportunities provided to use and develop writing and numeracy skills in other subjects lack challenge, such as the older pupils sequencing pictures to illustrate a timeline. Good levels of out-of-class activities enrich learning in, for

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instance, dance, music and sport. Equally, there is a continuing and nourishing diet of visits and visitors who strengthen the learning.

Parents and carers are very satisfied with the way that the school is highly vigilant in ensuring pupils' welfare. The monitoring of areas such as attendance and behaviour are robust and successful. Pupils say that when they need help there is always someone to turn to. Older pupils assist the staff very well in caring for and supporting the younger pupils at playtimes, for example. Support and guidance for parents and carers are of high quality through the arrangements for induction, transition and the sessions put on to inform parents and carers how they can help their children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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 headteacher and senior colleagues have a clear vision for the school and it is widely shared by all those involved in the life of the school. Staff are well motivated and morale is high. The continual improvements in pupils' outcomes testify to the strong leadership. All staff work effectively as a team and are highly committed to the pupils' welfare and progress. As a result, the school is rightly confident that all pupils benefit equally from what the school has to offer. Moreover, there are no instances of discrimination and pupils are actively and effectively encouraged to celebrate all differences between people. A significant part of this work is the strong promotion of community cohesion. The school has a clear view of the profile of its community and it is well-respected within it. Furthermore, the school has successfully sought to help pupils understand their part in wider national and global communities. This is effectively achieved, for instance, through work with local schools and projects linked to communities as diverse as Australia and Dubai.

Planning for improvement is thorough, and the priorities in the school improvement plan are an effective tool to move the school forward. To support this, the school is continually developing the expertise of subject leaders to enable them to play a full part as monitors and evaluators. However, some of the measures of success are not sharp enough to ensure the school has the clearest view of whether, and how well, the priorities have been met. Governors carry out their duties well. They play an important part in strategic and financial planning and are purposeful as critical friends in challenging the school to continue doing its best. Safeguarding pupils' welfare is good and all required child protection procedures and practices are in place. Parents and pupils praise strongly the school's work.

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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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

On the basis of lessons seen and the school's limited tracking of the children's achievements, the progress they make is generally good. Attainment moves from being broadly typical on entry to reception to a little above average when they enter Year 1. Strong emphasis is placed on developing children's personal and social skills and their knowledge and understanding of letter-sounds and early writing skills. Children are happy and settled in a safe and secure environment because: relationships are good and the processes for introducing the children to school are also effective. In discussion, parents and carers were very pleased with these aspects of the school's work, amongst others. Children behave well because they are interested in everything going on and they are fully involved in all of the activities indoors. They develop independence as they choose their own resources and activities. Children willingly take turns and share resources.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. They cannot be judged to be good until the shortcomings in the provision are successfully dealt with, particularly in two areas. Firstly, the outdoor area is not used to its full potential and, secondly, the checks made on children's attainment and progress is patchy. The outdoor area does not have resources that are as practical, varied and stimulating as those found indoors. Consequently, the outdoor learning is not as challenging. For example, there were no clipboards for the children to do their drawings while outside. It was noticeable that the children were working much better when the variety of resources outside was increased. Equally, in some areas of learning, detailed assessments have not yet been carried out and this lack of rigour affects the quality of planning to meet all of the children's needs.

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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	2
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

The majority of comments from parents and carers are positive. In just a small number of returns, parents and carers record some concerns, such as:

- classes with more than one age-group are less effective
- weaknesses in school-to-home communication
- unhappy with their child's progress
- unapproachability of staff.

The inspection team investigated these matters and found that there was no evidence to support these concerns during the inspection.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Anderton St Joseph's Catholic Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 72 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 161 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	52	72	19	26	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	61	85	10	14	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	46	64	22	31	3	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	47	65	20	28	3	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	53	74	15	21	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	47	65	18	25	4	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	50	69	19	26	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)	46	64	21	29	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	48	67	21	29	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	60	23	32	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	37	51	29	40	4	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	55	76	17	24	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	54	75	17	24	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.



24 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Anderton St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Chorley, PR6 9LZ

On behalf of the inspection team, can I say how much we enjoyed being in your good school recently. Thank you for your warm welcome, courtesy and the help you provided.

What we really liked about your school:

- your good behaviour, excellent attitudes to school and work and the very strong relationships you develop
- the good progress made by all pupils, including those who have extra learning needs
- your high levels of knowledge and understanding about living healthy and safe lifestyles
- the high attendance and your clear enjoyment of school
- the way that the good teaching and curriculum and highly effective care promote your personal development and give you an excellent foundation for the future
- the way that you all contribute to a safe and caring ethos in the school
- the good leadership and management of your school.

To improve your school further we have asked the school's leaders to ensure that:

- staff make improvements to the way that the Reception class is run, including better activities in the outdoor area
- staff improve their marking, so that you have an even better idea of what you need to do to improve further. You can be a great help by continuing to do your best work and following the advice from your teachers.

Yours sincerely

John Heap

Lead Inspector

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