

# St Mary and St Andrew's Catholic Primary School, Barton

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119444
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	379802
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 November 2011
<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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	104
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Gary James
<b>Headteacher</b>	Anne Charnley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 May 2007
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed 10 lessons taught by six teachers and held meetings with groups of pupils, governors, senior leaders and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at safeguarding procedures, documentation, including school and national data on pupils' progress, policies, improvement plans, local authority reports and samples of pupils' work. Questionnaires from pupils, staff and the 59 returned by parents and carers were scrutinised.

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

- How rigorously areas for improvement from the last inspection have been tackled.
- The way the curriculum is planned to ensure learning is challenging and engages all pupils.
- How effectively leaders and managers at all levels contribute to school self-evaluation and improvement planning.

## Information about the school

The school is smaller than most primary schools, and pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes. The great majority are of White British heritage, with a very small number from mixed or Asian heritage, none of whom speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is very low, and the proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below average. The school offers before and after-school provision, and this formed part of this inspection.

There have been significant staffing changes since the last inspection, particularly at senior leadership level. The headteacher has been in post for two years, and the deputy headteacher for one year.

The school has Healthy School status.

**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?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

## Main findings

This outstanding school successfully achieves its mission to provide 'a community where consideration and respect for others are paramount'. Pupils are known well and treated as individuals and love learning in the 'family' atmosphere. The comment: 'It's good to be here!' sums up pupils' views. Excellent care, guidance and support ensure pupils feel extremely safe and happy. Behaviour is exemplary and attendance is very high. The very rich curriculum successfully engages pupils by challenging them to think and to ask questions. In their questionnaires, parents and carers say their children enjoy school. Typical of their comments were, 'delighted with the school', 'professional, approachable staff', and, 'my child is known and valued'.

Achievement is outstanding and attainment is well-above average. Children make an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. High quality teaching throughout the school provides stimulating and imaginative tasks, carefully planned to challenge pupils of all abilities by building on their keen enthusiasm and positive attitudes. Consequently, all groups make excellent progress. Very well-targeted and sensitive support for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities ensures they make excellent progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Reading skills are well-above average. Effective improvement strategies have successfully boosted attainment in writing, particularly at the higher level and for boys. Pupils use wide and varied vocabulary to make their writing interesting and lively, although errors in spelling and punctuation and variable handwriting sometimes detract from the overall quality of written work.

The school uses high-quality assessment systems to track progress rigorously and provide clear information from which staff set challenging individual targets that pupils work hard to achieve. Pupils 'self-assess' their work and know what to do to reach the next level. Additional challenges for those who are able, gifted and talented inspire them to aim and attain even higher.

Leaders, managers, governors and staff work closely together to realise their vision for ongoing improvement. Searching self-review procedures result in strategies that have successfully improved all aspects of provision and fully overcome issues from the last inspection. Well-targeted development plans demonstrate that the school knows exactly what needs to be done to reach challenging goals. The school

demonstrates outstanding capacity for sustained improvement and gives excellent value for money.

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

- Further develop and embed strategies to improve pupils' spelling, punctuation and handwriting.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

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Lesson observations and discussions with pupils show very high levels of enjoyment and enthusiasm for learning. Excellent behaviour and cooperative attitudes result in outstanding achievement. Pupils use and develop exceptionally good literacy and mathematical skills across a range of subjects; in science, for example creating charts to measure differences in height and writing about investigations.

Pupils' skills on entry to school are typically above average. Attainment is well-above average when pupils leave Year 6 as shown in both school and national data. The work in pupils' books shows all groups of pupils make excellent progress in each year and in all subjects. They often exceed their targets as they move through the school. Science activities effectively develop investigational skills that pupils use extremely well in all their learning. They are very fluent readers. The majority are articulate, confident speakers who use imaginative vocabulary when explaining their ideas and answers and to make their writing interesting. However, spelling, punctuation and handwriting are a little weaker and this can detract from their otherwise thoughtful and maturely expressed ideas.

Pupils' enjoyment and appreciation of the world and their reflective approach to issues and life choices demonstrate their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have a keen sense of right and wrong. They treat others with great consideration. Older pupils are always protective of the younger ones, quickly saying, 'Let me help you', without prompting if they see someone needs help. They feel very safe in school and say bullying is not a problem because, 'teachers protect us'. They think the behaviour code is fair. They have an excellent understanding of health matters and certainly enjoy physical and sporting activities, often achieving considerable success in local competitions. Pupils participate enthusiastically in local and parish activities. The school council works actively to secure improvements such as milkshakes on the lunch menu and organising the Fair Trade 'Big Brew' event. Pupils develop respect for other lifestyles and cultures through meetings with other schools and global links such as the chocolate project with New Koforidua in Ghana. The 'Enterprise Week' provides first-hand experience of marketing and economic issues. Outstanding personal and social skills, high academic standards and attendance levels give pupils an excellent basis for their future economic well-being.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

**How effective is the provision?**

Pupils say their lessons are fun. Particularly strong features of teaching are skilled planning for different ages and abilities and the way staff swiftly spot and build on pupils' interests with imaginative, investigative activities. For example, older pupils extended their ability to solve problems through a fun, team-based approach when they tackled an increasingly challenging range of tasks in a mathematics lesson. Teaching assistants are very skilled, particularly when supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Accessible assessment systems provide valuable information to teachers to help them plan lessons and to direct help swiftly where needed. Pupils feel very well supported and say teacher's written prompts, known as 'tickled pink' and 'growing green', help them to improve their work to reach their targets.

The curriculum offers an excellent, well-balanced range of memorable academic, sporting, personal and social activities. Pupils have many opportunities to use and develop literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills in all subjects. Topics and themes are led by pupils' questions and are carefully tailored to respond to their interests. Careful adaptations ensure pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully involved in all learning activities with their classmates. Specialist teaching in science, music, French and ICT enhances pupils' enjoyment and skills; for example pupils in Year 3 and 4 all learn the violin or cello. Visits out of school, such as to a mosque, plus visitors and popular extra-curricular clubs enrich pupils' experience very effectively.

The school is a welcoming, well-maintained environment, where pupils say, 'everyone knows each other and plays together'. Individual needs are carefully considered and met through care, guidance and support of the highest quality. Any pupils who are vulnerable because of their circumstances are supported extremely well, and there are strong links with all external professional agencies. Before- and

<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

after-school provision is well organised, and those who attend enjoy the varied activities on offer. Excellent induction and transition arrangements ensure pupils move confidently between classes and on to the next stage of their education.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

High aspirations, good quality professional development and challenging performance management targets have resulted in sustained and significant improvement in all aspects of provision since the last inspection. Senior leaders and managers, staff and governors share a strong vision. There is a strong sense of teamwork and staff morale is very high. Governors are very involved and active in school and make an outstanding contribution. Their individual expertise and local community and parish links enable them to challenge the school rigorously.

An 'open door' approach encourages parents and carers to play a full part in their children's education. Pupils benefit from strong parental support. The school welcomes and builds on this by seeking and responding to their views, and keeping them very well informed through information evenings, such as 'Reading and Phonics for Parents' plus newsletters, emails and regular reports. Clear, accessible channels enable them to communicate with staff. Excellent partnerships with local schools and professional groups have extended pupils' experiences in ways the school alone cannot; for example, working with other choirs in preparation for a forthcoming advent service.

The promotion of equal opportunities is at the centre of the school's ethos, ensuring that all groups achieve well and participate fully in all activities. There is no discrimination. Good safeguarding arrangements, health, safety and risk assessments ensure pupils and users of the building are always safe and secure. Child protection training for all staff is up to date, all procedures are understood and quality assurance measures are under review. Outstanding community cohesion ensures the school has a very clear understanding of the community it serves. As a result, pupils learn, play and care for each other very happily and harmoniously. The biennial 'One World' week activities successfully develop pupils' awareness of and respect for different communities and ways of life in the wider world.

*These are the grades for the leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children's skills on entry are usually above average for their age, especially their independence and oral skills. Listening skills and knowledge of letter sounds are often a little weaker. Excellent care and welfare arrangements ensure children feel very safe and secure. They settle happily in the warm, welcoming atmosphere, behave extremely well and share and use equipment carefully. They enjoy learning and make excellent progress. By the end of their time in Reception, children are working above expected levels, with a significant proportion working into the next level.

Staff skilfully build children's confidence so they become increasingly independent and responsible, know how to care for themselves and be safe. Children follow routines happily. They enjoy healthy snacks and love working outside in the fresh air. Well-planned, interesting learning activities such as working together in the doctors' surgery or making dens outside stimulate children's natural curiosity to investigate and explore. High quality teaching provides a varied range of experiences, well balanced between those led by adults and those children select themselves. The strong focus on language and letter sounds ensures children progress rapidly in gaining early reading and writing skills through practical activities such as searching outside for objects to match different letters or using 'sound buttons' to build letters into words.

Excellent leadership has created a strong staff team, all highly committed to meet the unique needs of every child by constantly seeking to improve the provision. Extremely positive relationships with parents and carers and sensitive induction arrangements, including home visits, add to children's feelings of security and enjoyment of school.



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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

## Views of parents and carers

A majority of parents and carers returned questionnaires. Their responses were mainly positive. All agree the school keeps their children safe and helps them lead a healthy lifestyle. The very large majority feel the teaching is good, their children enjoy school, are making enough progress and they are kept informed about this.

A few feel they are not given enough help to support learning at home, their suggestions are not taken account of and that the school does not meet their child's particular needs. Inspectors discussed these points with the school. Parents and carers are given guidance to support learning, for example through information evenings and reports, their suggestions are sought and considered through formal consultation and informally through the 'open door' approach. Rigorous assessment and care, guidance and support arrangements ensure children's individual needs are met.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Mary and St Andrew's Catholic Primary School, Barton 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 inspector received 59 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 104 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	59	22	37	1	2	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	35	59	24	41	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	27	46	27	46	4	7	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	51	22	37	6	10	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	33	56	23	39	3	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	58	17	29	5	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	47	31	53	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)	24	41	23	39	5	8	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	44	23	39	8	14	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	26	44	23	39	6	10	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	39	25	42	5	8	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	26	44	26	44	5	8	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	51	23	39	5	8	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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"><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.**



10 November 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Mary and St Andrew's Catholic Primary School, Barton, Preston, PR3 5DY**

Thank you all for the very friendly welcome you gave us. We send a special 'thank you' to the school council and the children who talked to us at lunchtime. We were very impressed with your politeness and excellent behaviour. You are all really good ambassadors for your school. Your parents and carers are pleased that you enjoy school.

What a lot of exciting things happen at your school! I heard Year 3 and 4 playing their violins and cellos, saw you working together in your Houses during the One World week, and particularly enjoyed the mango smoothies!

This is what we found.

Your school is outstanding. You make an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Your school has excellent leaders, managers, teachers and governors who care for you extremely well and keep you very safe. Your hard work means you progress very well and reach standards well above those expected for your age. The curriculum provides wonderful experiences and activities, and you told us you enjoy science, mathematics, sports and all the visits.

Your writing has really improved. To make it even better, we have asked the school leaders to:

- help you improve your spelling, punctuation and handwriting.

We are sure you will help by continuing to work hard and enjoy learning and everything you do at school.

We send you all our very best wishes  
Yours sincerely

Kathleen McArthur  
Lead inspector

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