



Holy Angels' Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number 104464
LEA Knowsley

Inspection number 274860
Inspection dates 15 - 16 June 2005
Reporting inspector Judith Clarke

Inspection deemed to have been carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996 according to section 12(3) of the same act.

Type of School	Primary school	School address	Sidney Powell Avenue
School category	Voluntary aided		Westvale
Age range of pupils	3 - 11		Kirkby, L32 0TP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0151 4778400
Number on roll	517	Fax number	0151 4778401
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Fr Andrew Rowlands
Date of previous inspection	October 1999	Headteacher	Mrs A M Coffey

Age group	Published	Reference no.
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Introduction

The inspection was a pilot of the new arrangements for inspection announced by Ofsted in its consultation paper of February 2004. It was carried out with the support and co-operation of Holy Angels' Catholic Primary School and of the local education authority.

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

A larger than average school in a socially and economically disadvantaged area. The vast majority of children are of white British background. There are no children who are at an early stage of learning English. Thirty five per cent of children are known to be eligible for free school meals. The children's skills on entry to the school are well below the levels expected. Thirty one per cent of the children have learning difficulties and disabilities, which is above average, although the number of children with statements of their special educational needs is below average. The school is taking part in an Intensive Support Programme. It received the Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2001 and 2004.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

This is a satisfactory school with some good features. The school feels it is stronger than it is. This is partly because its self-evaluation is not as sharp as it should be. Although the school has travelled a long way, much remains to be done. The headteacher has managed change in a strong and purposeful way and recognises significant improvements made in recent years. Staff are successful in helping the children to work hard and as a result, children have good attitudes. Children enjoy coming to school and enjoy their lessons. Their behaviour is outstanding. Parents feel that the school does its best for their children and is supportive of their needs. All in the school are helped to feel valued. The ethos of the school is good.

Attainment on entry is well below average. The children have a satisfactory start in nursery and reception classes. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The children's skills of observation, experimentation and investigation in English, mathematics and science are often underused in lessons and this hampers learning. Assessment procedures although satisfactory are not refined sufficiently to identify exactly how well the children are learning. The children make satisfactory progress. This year standards by the end of Year 6 will remain well below average, but there are signs of improvement in Year 5. The teachers ensure all are included in lessons and children with special educational needs have appropriate help. The school takes good care of the children. It is active in ensuring the children adopt healthy lifestyles and this aspect of their work is outstanding.

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The school works effectively with many other agencies for the benefit of the children. The school is well placed to improve further. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

Grade: 3

What the school should do to improve further

Focus on:

- continuing to raise standards in English, mathematics and science, particularly in ensuring the children have more opportunities for investigational and problem solving work

- ensuring that rigorous self-evaluation and assessments are refined to help staff understand what is working well and what are the next important steps that will help the children to learn better.

Achievement and standards

The school data show, and the inspection team agrees, that overall the children make satisfactory progress. The decline in standards in the last four years has been halted. In the past the children experienced some teaching which was inadequate. This had a negative effect on their systematic acquisition of basic skills and understanding. Currently teachers are doing well to identify and remedy gaps in the children's knowledge, which slows their progress. Teachers are still dealing with this, especially in Years 3 to 6, although standards overall are improving. The schools participation in the Intensive Support Programme and the development of target setting systems are beginning to have a positive effect on children's learning. In some year groups this could be quicker. The children in Year 6 say that sometimes they could work harder. There is much to be done in ensuring the children use and apply their skills effectively to solve problems in practical situations.

Most children start school with skills that are well below average, particularly in their communication and social skills. By the end of the reception year most of the children are still working towards the levels expected. In Years 1 and 2 children continue to make steady progress and reach broadly average standards in aspects of reading, writing and mathematics.

In Years 3 to 6 the children make satisfactory progress overall. Standards are currently well below average. Children with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in their lessons because they have appropriate help.

Grade: 3

Personal development and well-being

Personal development and well being are good. The children are very proud of their school. They are enthusiastic, most work hard and co-operate well with each other and adults and enjoy their lessons. Behaviour in lessons and around school is outstanding with children showing respect and consideration for others. Children willingly accept responsibility and are cheerful, polite and helpful. The school council has been influential in bringing improvements to school life. For example, they have sought improvements in the toilet facilities

and the provision of healthy drinks. School council members represent their classmates very effectively.

The school has worked hard to improve attendance which currently stands just below the national average, with illness and the number of holidays taken during term time contributing to the situation. The school has altered its holiday pattern to try to help parents. The learning mentor has developed a range of successful rewards and strategies that have raised attendance levels.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school celebrates children's achievements in lessons and assemblies. The house system rewards effort and good behaviour and encourages children to work as a team. They gain a knowledge and understanding of world religions and cultures through lessons and displays. Although satisfactory, there is more to do to improve the development of basic skills, which will aid the children when they leave school. Children are very strongly encouraged to adopt safe and healthy lifestyles. The school is seeking to gain the Healthy School Award; an important part of this has been making fresh fruit available for children in Years 3 to 6.

Grade: 2

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. This is not as good as the school feels but it closely reflects the progress that children make. In some classes teaching is consistently good and here the children make better progress. Most lessons are carefully planned to ensure that important things are not missed and that the work children are being asked to do is not too hard. Occasionally work is a bit too easy. This is partly because targets children are set for English and mathematics are at present not updated often enough. Teachers adapt work for different groups of children but sometimes more variation is needed, especially for children with special educational needs. Teachers and teaching assistants form good classroom teams, working well together to help children to learn.

The calmness around the school and the enthusiasm of children to join in with learning activities owes a lot to teachers managing their classrooms well. They create lively and stimulating classrooms and make sure that children behave very well. Teachers build up a good understanding of the children, keeping a

close eye on their work and behaviour. Assessments do not identify well enough what the children have learned and what they need to do next. Marking of children's work is inconsistent and sometimes teachers do not follow up their written comments.

Grade: 3

Curriculum and other activities

The curriculum is satisfactorily matched to the needs of children of all abilities and all statutory requirements are met. Work in classrooms is enriched with many additional opportunities to take part in educational visits. The school is careful to ensure that all children are involved. The children are encouraged to develop a healthy and safe lifestyle, with courses on citizenship, relationships and drugs awareness run by a range of agencies including a local police officer, nurse and the learning mentor. In recognition of the schools' work in sports it has achieved the prestigious Activemark Gold Award. The stunning ceramic mural produced by an artist in residence with the children is a fine example of the school extending the children's skills and creativity. There is a broad range of clubs and activities at lunchtime and after school. There are good links with local football clubs and other local organisations.

The school has worked hard to provide its children with clean and safe facilities in spite of the poor condition of much of the fabric of the building.

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support

The school takes good care of all its children. Children trust staff and know who to turn to if they need help. There is very good support for them when they are upset or troubled. The learning mentor provides valuable input by working closely with the children and their families. Parents and carers feel welcome in school and are strongly encouraged to be involved in their children's education. Monitoring of the children's progress is in its early stages. The children say that they feel safe in school, because the rare instances of bullying are dealt with swiftly and effectively by all staff. Good targeted help is provided for some children who find their learning hard. The arrangements for settling new children into school and for their transfer to secondary schools are good. Child protection and health and safety procedures are very well established and there are good links with outside agencies, which give a range of help to the children.

Grade: 2

Leadership and management

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher has led the school well through difficult times and has tackled weaknesses in teaching with determination, no matter what the personal cost. The main challenge for leadership in the future is to improve teaching and learning from satisfactory to good. Greater refinement is needed to achieve this important next step. The headteacher recognises that the new building will provide an exciting new opportunity for the school. She has been active in providing valuable professional development for staff. She has effectively invested in the teaching assistants in the school and as a result a good number are working to gain higher qualifications.

The deputy headteacher has introduced a new approach to monitoring the progress children make. However, the system has got some way to go before it is fully embedded. It does not yet include enough detail about children's progress, mainly because the school's systems for monitoring effectiveness focus insufficiently on what the children should be learning and how well they are progressing. This lack of focus contributed to the school's errors in self-evaluation, particularly in relation to leadership and management being judged far stronger by the school than it actually is.

The governing body has changed considerably in the past year and is now much more involved in working with senior staff to help raise standards and support the headteacher's vision for a better school. At the moment they rely very heavily on the headteacher telling them about standards in the school. The school has achieved much in recent years and now has a secure platform on which to build and improve.

Grade: 3

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INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.	School Overall	16-19
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OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	

ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS

How well do learners achieve?	3	
The <i>standards</i> reached by learners	4	
How well learners' make <i>progress</i> , taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The behaviour of learners	1	
How well learners enjoy their education	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community.	2	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	

THE QUALITY OF PROVISION

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3	
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily.	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise.	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse.	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health.	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe.	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements.	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place.	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism.	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them.	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships.	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them.	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills.	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams.	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in Key Stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form.	NA
Education for all learners aged 14-19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy.	NA

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Holy Angels' Catholic Primary School
Sidney Powell Avenue
Westvale
Kirkby

16 May 2005

Dear Children,

As you know, three inspectors recently visited your school to find out how well your teachers are helping you with your learning. Thank you for being so friendly and talking to the inspectors. It was really interesting to listen to what you had to say, getting your views on the school and finding out what you enjoy doing most.

The things we think are really good about your school are:

- The way you behave in lessons and in the playground.
- Your attitudes to your lessons and the way you enjoy learning.
- The way your headteacher listens to your views and uses them to improve the school.
- The way you understand how important it is to be active and healthy and keep yourselves safe.
- The way all the people in your school care for you.

We have asked your teachers to improve some things to make your school better. They are:

- We would like your teachers to make even better checks on how well you all learn.
- We would like you to have more opportunities to practise your skills of experimentation, observation and investigation in your English, mathematics and science lessons.

Thank you for helping us so much with the inspection of your school. We hope that you will carry on enjoying your learning and that when your new school is built you will think it is brilliant. Most of all we hope that you will carry on helping your teachers to make your school even better.

Best wishes for the future.

Judith Clarke
Alastair Younger
Peter Jones