



# St Luke's Catholic Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 104460  
**LEA** Knowsley  
**Inspection number** 277163  
**Inspection dates** 7 December 2005 to 8 December 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Paul Bamber CfBT Lead Inspector

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Shaw Lane
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Prescot
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		Merseyside L35 5AT
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 4778580
<b>Number on roll</b>	242	<b>Fax number</b>	0151 4931476
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr A Green
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18 September 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs M Clarke

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 7 December 2005 - 8 December 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 277163
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This slightly smaller than average school has 220 children on roll, 28 of whom attend part-time in the Nursery. It is situated in an area which is considerably more deprived than the national average. A well above average proportion of children have learning difficulties and/or disabilities with an average number having a statement of need. Quite unusually within the context of the local authority, the school has had a considerable increase from 2 to 20 percent of children with English as an additional language over the last 18 months. This has confronted the school with considerable challenges to its existing resources and expertise. The school offers additional services such as adult education, family learning and after school care. It is part of a collaborative cluster of schools and has Investors in People status and a Healthy Schools Award.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 3**

The school has many good features, including good relationships and close partnerships with parents and the church, which give it a positive ethos. Overall, it is satisfactory in its effectiveness and gives satisfactory value for money. The school's self-evaluation is over-generous in its view of pupils' progress, the curriculum and leadership and management because it is based on past rather than present achievements. Although Year 6 children achieved well in 2003 and in 2004, overall achievement was satisfactory in 2005 and is so currently. Achievement is best in English and least good in mathematics. This is because teaching is better in English, particularly in Key Stage 2, and the teaching of mathematics has relative weaknesses. Teaching quality, therefore, is satisfactory overall. The quality of provision and progress in Foundation Stage is good. Children's personal development is good, they behave well and have positive attitudes because they are well cared for and supported. The curriculum is satisfactory overall because while it provides children with many enriching experiences it does not meet fully the needs of more able children, especially in Key Stage 1. Leadership and management are satisfactory on balance. The school's management has worked tirelessly to transform the school's buildings into an attractive, well modernised unit. However, there are some relative weaknesses in the school's self evaluation and in the rigour of its plans for improvement. Since the last report there have been good improvements in those areas identified as weaknesses at that time. The school does have the capacity to improve further.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

Aspects of these issues have already been identified by the school and appear as priorities in the school development plan.

- Improve teaching and achievement in mathematics.
- Give the more able children in years 1 and 2 more challenging work so that they achieve the highest standards of which they are capable.
- Focus action plans much more specifically on ways in which children's learning and achievement should improve.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Overall, achievement and standards are satisfactory. The school's self-evaluation of good is based on the period 2001-2004 when the school made significant strides in English and mathematics, in the Year 6 national tests. However, in 2005, although standards and achievement were broadly average, this highlighted a declining trend in mathematics. Current targets and inspection evidence predict similar outcomes in the 2006 national tests in Year 6, confirming the trend to achieve or exceed targets in English, but to not meet them fully in mathematics. In Year 2, standards were much lower in the 2005 teacher assessments, than in previous years. The exceptionally low standards in writing were largely because of the specific nature of the group, with a

high proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or at an early stage of acquiring English. Although there are indications that many more children will achieve expected standards in the 2006 national tests, there is a continuing trend of relatively few Year 2 children attaining the higher levels, in reading, writing and mathematics. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve as well as their peers throughout the school, as do those children who are looked after or who have special gifts and talents. Most of the increasing numbers of children who acquire English as their second language make good progress. However, the school lacks the resources or expertise to fully challenge the more able of these children. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage, entering with below average skills and moving into Year 1 with broadly expected standards.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Children make good progress in all aspects of their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Because of the good care and support they receive throughout the school, they develop good attitudes to learning and good co-operative behaviour. Children say they feel well prepared for secondary school. There are a few children who display poor levels of concentration or who have emotional difficulties, but they receive good help from staff so that they work steadily in lessons. Children develop sensible attitudes to school. They take on roles and responsibilities well and the School Council is well involved in decision-making. Children say there is little problem with bullying and if problems do arise, they know who to turn to for help. There have been no exclusions. The children develop a good awareness of safety, healthy living and the importance of community in their lives, for example through achieving the Mayor's Award. The children are strongly encouraged to attend school and be punctual through various rewards and through the good work of the staff including the learning mentor. These are having a positive impact so that the rate of attendance is now close to the national average and the punctuality of almost all children is good.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. It is good in Foundation Stage, where effective planning, good resources and stimulating activities bring out the best in the children in all areas of their learning. The teaching of English is good and for the most able children in Year 6, it is outstanding. The school's effective drive to improve writing has already paid dividends in Year 6 with a much higher than average proportion of children attaining expected levels in 2005 national tests. The teaching of mathematics, however, is much less strong. In Key Stage 1, more able children are sometimes set relatively undemanding work and in Key Stage 2, the teaching does not always ensure that children consolidate their basic number skills and undertake tasks

that match their needs. The school has rightly identified that there is a weakness in the teaching of mental mathematics and is taking steps to improve this aspect. Children are keen to learn and do well. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are given good support to help them achieve as well as others. The teaching of children with English as an additional language is currently under resourced and so although the school is responding well to the sudden influx of these children it does not as yet fully meet the needs of the most able amongst them. Assessment procedures are used satisfactorily and work is marked rigorously, children commenting: 'what the teacher writes helps me do better'.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and has some good additional features. Inspectors' satisfactory judgement is at variance with the school's view because, although basic skills of literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) are covered well, there are relative weaknesses in mathematics. The curriculum does not fully meet the needs of more able children in Key Stage 1, nor the most able of those who are learning English as an additional language. Strengths include the variety of activities, such as themed weeks (for example, for science and ICT), visits and residential experiences and the Foundation Stage curriculum which enables children to make good progress. Physical education is given a high profile and children say they like it when the sports coaches teach them. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools Award. Children have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument, including trumpet and keyboards. There is a good range of lunchtime and after-school activities. The partnership with the associated high school promotes aspects such as modern foreign languages and sports well.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Inspectors agree with the school's evaluation that the care, guidance and support provided for children are good. Child protection procedures are well established and effective, and there are regular checks on health and safety issues. The improvements to the building and outdoor areas mean it is now a high quality place for children to learn. All staff are sensitive to the needs of the children, especially those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the most vulnerable. Parents indicate they are confident they will be listened to if they have a concern about their child. The safety and well-being of children are a high priority for staff and are promoted well through the curriculum and through partnerships with outside services and parents. Staff know the children and chart their personal development well. The learning mentor is very effective in tracking the progress of and helping the few poor attendees and most vulnerable children. The very few children in public care are given very good help.

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## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Overall, leadership and management are satisfactory with several good features. The headteacher has many strengths and has been very influential in raising standards since the last inspection. However, some weaknesses exist in provision for mathematics and in the achievements of more able children in Key Stage 1. Although management has rightly noted that the teaching of mental mathematics is a relative weakness, it has not been so rigorous in identifying other shortcomings in the teaching of the subject.

The fabric of the school buildings is much improved and there are many strong partnerships with parents, the parish, local schools and organisations. All senior managers work successfully to ensure children's health, safety and good personal development.

Successive literacy coordinators have been effective in considerably raising standards in English. However, there is a relative weakness in self-evaluation as evidenced by the mismatch between the school's and inspectors' judgements about aspects of the school's work. The rather optimistic judgements the school makes of its provision are based more on past than current achievements. Action- planning should be sharper. There is too little detail about what children need to do better and how the actions identified in plans will make this happen. Governors are highly supportive of the school and ensure tight financial management. However, they are not involved enough in systematically evaluating the school's provision in order to effectively hold it to account for its standards. The school has the capacity to improve as evidenced by its good improvement since the last inspection.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

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

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for making us so welcome during the two days we spent in your school. We very much appreciated the open and frank way in which you chatted to us and let us know so many interesting things about your school. We would like to share with you those things we thought were good about the school and those things we felt it could do a bit better.

What we liked most about your school:

- that you are so friendly, well behaved and obviously enjoy school
- the way in which you are well looked after and supported by the staff
- how well you are taught in English, especially the older children
- the way in which your headteacher and the governors have worked so hard to make the school look so nice and have provided you with an attractive setting in which to learn.

We have asked the school to do the following things to help you improve:

- to help you do as well in mathematics as you do in English and science, especially the older children
- make sure that those of you in the infants, who find the work a bit easier than other children, do as well as you possibly can
- when teachers make plans to improve the school they say clearly how they expect your work to get better.

Thank you for helping us with the inspection of your school. We hope that you continue to enjoy school and do well with your work and carry on trying really hard to improve.