



Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 104935
LEA Sefton
Inspection number 277262
Inspection dates 15 February 2006 to 16 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Graham Martin CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Ford Close
School category	Voluntary aided		Litherland
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Liverpool, Merseyside L21 0EP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0151 928 3676
Number on roll	148	Fax number	0151 949 0786
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Rev F Simpson
Date of previous inspection	11 September 2000	Headteacher	Mrs J Travers

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an additional inspector.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average school in an area of significant social and economic disadvantage. Higher than average numbers of pupils are entitled to free school meals. There is high pupil mobility. On entry to the school, attainments on average are well below those expected for children of similar age. Nearly all pupils are white British but almost a quarter have some form of learning difficulty and/or disability. Most classes are organised in mixed age groups. Following a period of instability, the current headteacher has been in post for less than three school terms. The school recently integrated its nursery provision into the main building but some Year 5 and 6 pupils are taught in a separate unit a short distance away.

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's own evaluation that it provides a satisfactory education for its pupils is accurate. Pupils are well cared for and the school makes good provision for their personal and social development. Pupils' achievement from a very low starting point is satisfactory.

Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in their personal and social development. Provision for these children is good because consistently good teaching and better learning have resulted from integrating the Foundation Stage into the main building.

Standards by Year 6 are below the national average. In failing to meet its targets in the 2005 national tests the school recognises the weaknesses caused by instabilities in staffing that led to underachievement. Now, good leadership by a new headteacher has improved teaching, restored stability and brought the school back on track to meet sufficiently challenging 2006 targets. However, low standards in Year 2 reflect teaching that requires further improvement to meet the needs of pupils with poor learning skills.

Although attendance remains unsatisfactory, good support for pupils' needs helps to sustain positive attitudes and improve learning skills. There is good care for pupils. However, the overall quality of support and guidance they receive is merely satisfactory because improvements in the use of assessment have not been embedded sufficiently.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Staff work well as a team towards the headteacher's vision and agreed improvement priorities. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The headteacher has set out a clear agenda for improving teaching and learning. As a result, some good teaching is now evident across the school. The capacity for improvement is satisfactory but further development of the leadership skills of key staff is needed to make this better. Decisive action by the headteacher and governors has reduced the school's spending so that it provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve attendance.
- Raise standards in writing, mathematics and science.
- Improve teaching further, using assessment more effectively to improve learning and achievement.
- Improve leadership so that it is consistently good.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. From a point well below expected levels on starting school, all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make

satisfactory progress. However, standards remain below the national average by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, particularly in writing, mathematics and science. National test results in 2005 showed standards below the national average at Year 2, with standards in writing significantly below average. At Year 6, standards were well below the national average because of poor test results in mathematics and science. This group of pupils experienced severe disruption to their learning during Years 5 and 6 as a result of staffing issues. These issues have now been resolved.

Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in their personal and social development. Most attain the goals for the end of this stage of learning but some are still working towards these goals on entering Year 1. By Year 2 standards of reading and mathematics are satisfactory but writing remains well below average. Pupils' listening skills are poor and their vocabulary is not developed well enough to help them to be better writers. Standards are below average in Year 6. Up-to-date assessments and evidence from the inspection show that pupils in the current Year 6 are making satisfactory progress towards the levels expected of them in reading, writing, mathematics and science, although the quality of handwriting and general presentation is unsatisfactory.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. Behaviour is good and attitudes to learning are positive. Attendance remains unsatisfactory but good steps are taken towards meeting challenging attendance targets. Pupils are polite and helpful, relationships between them are good and pupils are respectful and affectionate towards staff. They say that they enjoy school and that their teachers help them to get on well with each other, adding that new praise and reward systems help them to learn better. The good contribution of a learning mentor helps pupils to make the right choices in their actions. Opportunities for pupils to help with improving their school are developing well, such as deciding on the action to achieve the 'Healthy Schools' standards. They make a good contribution to the wider community by raising funds for charity. Learning to live a healthy lifestyle is enthusiastically supported by pupils, such as when leading playtime activities. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Learning through the 'Here I Am' programme gives pupils a wider understanding of world faiths and cultures and a good awareness of personal responsibility for their behaviour and safety.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. When teachers provide interesting and challenging lessons that are matched well to pupils' needs, teaching is good and pupils learn well. The introduction of routine assessments and setting targets for English and

mathematics helps pupils learn better and is starting to raise standards. Pupils in Key Stage 2 who understand what they need to do to improve their writing, for instance, are making good progress. However, not all staff are using assessment well enough to set pupils targets that will raise standards more quickly. Some teachers deal effectively with inattentive pupils in lessons but this is not consistent across the school.

Parents value the teachers' work. The great majority are happy that the teaching is helping their child to learn and achieve. Pupils say they enjoy lessons, particularly where they are active, saying that they like to learn by having 'lots of interesting things to do', such as experiments in science or using computers to help with mathematics. The best teaching occurs when pupils see a purpose to their learning and when lessons match pupils' different learning styles. Adults who help pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities show a good level of care for these pupils and help them to achieve as well as they should.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and improving quickly. It meets pupils' needs and helps them to build their skills and knowledge steadily. Wider opportunities for developing literacy and numeracy skills are being introduced so that learning is more relevant and motivating. For example, visiting artists and performers enrich learning, helping to motivate pupils to improve their writing. Activities outside lessons are satisfactory in range and quality and much appreciated by the pupils. The 'Here I Am' programme is effectively used across the school and supports pupils' personal, social and health education well.

Improvements to managing the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities mean that the curriculum provides well for these pupils, with clear plans for these pupils' learning and a good range of programmes to help them.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. The quality of care is good and all staff work hard to ensure each child is safe, happy and ready to learn. The guidance and support for pupils' learning is satisfactory. Improvements to assessment are not yet consistently embedded in the school's practice to make learning better for all pupils. However, the school is improving its practice by sharing the good work modelled by some teachers. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is effective. Adequate child protection procedures are in place and there is good guidance and support for pupils who may be vulnerable. Pupils have trusting relationships with adults who care for them; they say that they know who to turn to if they have a concern or need advice. This feeling of confidence in the care provided makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. Staff are vigilant about health and safety checks and good procedures for first aid are implemented effectively.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The new headteacher's good leadership has brought about rapid improvement. Better teamwork and an improved learning climate have followed a period of instability. The headteacher's vision of a positive learning ethos, based on Christian principles, is clearly stated and effectively supported by governors, staff and parents. Overall leadership remains only satisfactory because the leadership roles of other key staff are not fully developed, though plans to strengthen these roles are clearly defined.

The focus on improving achievement and raising standards remains a priority. Good routines for checking the school's work have been established but the wider sharing of good practice is at an early stage. For example, while there is more good teaching, the effective use of assessment is inconsistent. The school improvement plan is realising its focus on improving teaching, attitudes to learning, achievement and standards. Good links with education partners help to spread good practice and improve the quality of teaching and learning. Good teamwork leads to good day to day management of routines, making the school orderly and calm. Pupils feel safe and well cared for, even though some find following school rules and routines difficult. Satisfactory use of resources enables the school to work effectively towards improvement commitments.

Relationships with parents have improved and staff are working well to involve them in making the school a focal point of the community. Staff respond well to suggestions for improvement. Parents and pupils hold the school in good regard. They are suitably consulted, such as over improving pupils' safety at the end of the school day and in the involvement of pupils in structured lunchtime activities.

This is a school that has laid a firm foundation for future improvement. Its capacity to improve is satisfactory and strengthening well through its determination to raise standards by developing the leadership of staff and improving teaching and learning.

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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>	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	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	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	3	NA

The quality of provision

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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

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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

You may remember that I recently visited your school to check its work. My job was to find out how well your school is working for you, your family and your community. Thank you for your friendly welcome and for helping me to find out about the work that you do together.

I found out that your teachers care for you well and think that you are all equally important. Below are some of the things that I think are good about your school.

- You are all cared for equally well and helped to learn as well as each other.
- Your headteacher is doing a good job to make your school better. She has good friends to help her, including many of the children.
- The adults give you good help if you have problems.
- Your school teaches you well to live healthy and safe lives.

I have suggested a few things that will improve your school.

- You should work hard with your teachers to make your writing, mathematics and science better.
- The teachers all need to check that you are learning well and give you good advice to help you get better.
- Some of you must get better at coming to school when you are supposed to.

I enjoyed my visit to your school and wish you well for the future.