



St Wilfrids Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106509
LEA Wigan
Inspection number 277578
Inspection dates 3 May 2006 to 4 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Delia Hiscock CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Golborne Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Ashton-in-Makerfield
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Wigan, Lancashire WN4 8SJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01942 707101
Number on roll	228	Fax number	01942 204597
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Harry Jones
Date of previous inspection	10 October 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Clare Orrell

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This average size school, situated in Ashton-in-Makerfield, Wigan, serves an urban area with a mixed population. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average and almost all pupils are of white British heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly higher than average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. Inspection findings match the school's view that it provides a good standard of education with some exciting seeds of development. These include 'learning journeys' for pupils, shared writing journals with parents and use of specialist sports expertise. The strong leadership team and discerning approach of the headteacher have given the school a renewed sense of direction, instilled robust systems to check and measure the work of the school and enriched the curriculum. Middle managers, much strengthened by the deputy, are professional in their individual subject leads and have contributed well to the improvement the school has made since the previous inspection; more particularly in the last two years. This includes much improved provision for information and communication technology (ICT) and a new Nursery that has contributed to the outstanding provision in the Foundation Stage. The good level of care, support and guidance places pupils at the centre of the school's work. This is reflected in the good level of attendance, personal development and pupils' enjoyment of school. Parents think so too and they are positive about the school.

Good teaching makes learning enjoyable and interesting for the most part so progress is good. Standards are above average at the end of Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science because pupils achieve well overall. Improvements in writing reflect some excellent lessons and recent additional support that is raising attainment. That said, few pupils in Key Stage 2 know how to improve their work.

The curriculum is good and the school is right to plan more links across subjects and develop further management use of assessment information. The school has an accurate knowledge of itself but is overly cautious in making judgements. As such, it is well placed to move forward. Given the relatively low level of funding, balanced with pupils' good achievement, it provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop subject links further to build on the good range of curriculum activities.
- Share targets with pupils so that they know how to improve their work.
- Develop the use of assessment by subject managers.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

All pupils achieve well, including those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD). At the end of their year in Reception, almost all children meet the goals set for

this age and some exceed them, particularly in writing, having made really good progress from their average level of attainment when they start Nursery.

In Key Stage 1 standards are slightly above average in reading and mathematics but

below average in writing, where just half the pupils reached the expected levels in 2005

and none reached the higher level. To tackle this shortfall, there have been leadership changes which are already paying dividends in pupils' learning by the end of Year 2. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' work confirms the above average standards reached in the 2005 national tests. This reflects a more settled picture following changes in teachers' roles to redress some inexperience in Years 5 and 6 over the last two years. During this period, test results in 2004 dipped in mathematics and science below those of 2003, and reduced slightly in English. The rise in the 2005 test results reflects strong leadership support and expertise. Targets set a good level of challenge, and reflect well

the greater proportion of boys in some classes. Inspectors agree with the school's view of attainment.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy coming to school, work hard in lessons and cooperate well with their classmates. This is reflected in their good attendance. The shared faith messages mean that the vast majority are tolerant and respectful of the cultures, beliefs and traditions of others. They understand right from wrong and are courteous and polite to each other and to visitors. The overwhelming majority of pupils behave very well in lessons, around the school and in the playground. They say that they feel safe and know what they need to do to be safe. They express very few concerns about bullying, racism or any other form of discrimination. They work well in teams too. The school has successfully tackled the unacceptable behaviour of a tiny minority, with support from the local rugby club, Wigan Warriors. The school's recent 'Healthy Eating' week reinforced the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. Pupils drink water regularly, eat healthily and take exercise in school. They develop a good understanding about health matters, such as the dangers of smoking and substance abuse. The school council represents pupils well and has a say in decisions such as the new playground markings. The basic skills pupils gain and the responsibilities they undertake as prefects, librarians and 'buddies' all help to ensure that they are well equipped for work in the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good and, in the main, pupils make good progress. When asked what they like most about school, many of them say that they enjoy their lessons and that some of them are 'good fun'. Inspection findings uphold

these views. Where lessons involve problem-solving, exploratory activities and plenty of purposeful talk, pupils are well motivated and positive about learning. Most teachers use a good range of methods to encourage pupils to think and to explain for themselves. Successful teamwork between teachers and support assistants and fun learning plans pay dividends in helping pupils with LDD to learn quickly.

Teachers plan lessons well and share with pupils what will be achieved. They assess pupils' work accurately and mark it clearly. However, few pupils know their targets and many are unsure how they might improve their work. As such the use of assessment in subjects is underdeveloped. In the small number of lessons that are ordinary, the pace of learning is slower and sometimes, too many worksheets are used. In such lessons, the activities do not meet the learning needs of all pupils sufficiently closely so they only make satisfactory progress. Opportunities to stretch them to the limit are missed.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. All statutory requirements are met. Activities are effectively planned and organised to meet the needs of all the pupils to build on their skills and knowledge. Pupils with LDD are equally involved in activities and supported by learning plans closely linked to classroom work. Personal, social, health and citizenship education (PHSE) helps pupils to understand the choices and responsibilities they will face in the future. There is good emphasis on literacy and numeracy and effective additional sessions to boost pupils' basic skills in both key stages. The school rightly intends to develop links across subjects to provide more opportunities for themed topic work to expand pupils' learning journeys. Skills for life are now extended by opportunities to learn French and Spanish, there are lots of visits and visitors, and pupils have plenty of opportunities to enjoy the good range of activities after school. They enjoy taking part and developing their skills further.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This is a caring school where staff know pupils well and use this knowledge to meet pupils' personal needs well. Consequently, pupils have trusting relationships with adults and the vast majority feel safe in school. Good arrangements help smooth the start to Nursery. Child protection procedures are well established so any vulnerable pupil is quickly identified and supported, often through the school's good links with outside agencies. Health and safety procedures and assessments of risk are in place, with concerns taken seriously and tackled as soon as possible. Staff support pupils well academically. As one parent commented, 'Their enthusiasm and encouragement has not only developed my son's academic skills but has succeeded in enhancing his confidence.' However, few pupils are sufficiently clear of what they need to do next to improve their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are of good quality. Pupils' well-being and achievement are at the heart of the school's work. The strong leadership of the headteacher has accurately set out the next stages of development for the school. Since her appointment, and following a year of effective interim leadership by the deputy, improvements have been measured but substantial. These include provision for ICT, greater emphasis on basic skills in Key Stage 1, challenging targets for the more able pupils, and strengthened science and mathematical problem-solving. In addition, there is excellent leadership of the Foundation Stage. The leadership team works towards the same goals, linking innovations to enjoyment and enrichment of the curriculum. Features of learning and achievement identified in the school's plans for improvement are closely linked to the training and development needs of staff. These should make the planned 'learning journeys' for pupils smooth, and achievement all the greater.

The school knows itself well and listens to pupils, parents and outside agencies. Subject leaders have started to seek pupils' views to find out what they think about the work set for them and what would make things better for them as learners. These messages are shared with staff and used to make improvements in, for example, mathematical problem-solving. The school acts to change provision to meet the needs of all learners, ensuring that all pupils have an equal chance to do their best. The views of parents and pupils are positive overall and are acted on.

Governors are very diligent in their work and active in school life. They use their expertise well and support the school well. The school is well placed to make further improvements.

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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?	2	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	1	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?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	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	2	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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	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?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	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

Thank you very much for welcoming us into your school. We really enjoyed talking with you and finding out what you like best about your school. I am delighted to tell you that your school is good. We think that all the adults take good care of you and listen to what you say.

We particularly liked the way that you all work so hard and try to do your best. We think that the way you work well together and behave is good.

We could see that you enjoy your lessons. Your teachers try to make lessons and all the other things you do interesting and enjoyable for you. Lots of the activities and lessons, such as the French and Spanish you study and the clubs you have, help to give you a good start for the future.

We could see also that you know how to keep healthy and safe, and that many of you take on important responsibilities such as prefects and playground 'buddies'. Well done!

To make your school even better, we have asked your teachers to:

- plan activities to help you to use your skills across a range of subjects
- share targets with you and help you to improve your work
- use the information from the tests they set you to check that your work matches what you need to learn next.

Good luck for the future. Keep working hard and enjoying your school.