



St Philip's Catholic Primary and Nursery School

Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 108033
LEA Leeds
Inspection number 277885
Inspection dates 12 June 2006 to 13 June 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Anthony Anderson CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	St Philip's Avenue
School category	Voluntary aided		Leeds
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		West Yorkshire LS10 3SL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0113 2716763
Number on roll	163	Fax number	0113 2716763
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Barbara Muhl
Date of previous inspection	16 October 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Bridget Forbes

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3 to 11	12 June 2006 - 13 June 2006	277885

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Philip's is a smaller than average Catholic primary voluntary aided school. It is situated a few miles to the south of Leeds city centre. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly above the national average. The majority of pupils are White British and a small percentage are from other ethnic groups. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is above the national average. The school serves an area of relatively high disadvantage. The school has achieved the Healthy School Award Level 1 and also has Fair Trade School Status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The inspection confirms that the school's evaluation of itself is accurate. This is a good school and it provides good value for money.

The school's Catholic ethos is very much at its heart and every pupil is highly valued. The pupils' personal development is outstanding and they positively sparkle with enthusiasm, which has a significant impact on the good progress they make. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Although many pupils arrive in the Nursery with poor speaking and listening skills, the good planning and wide range of interesting early learning opportunities helps to ensure that the majority are on track to reach the expected levels of attainment by the time they leave Reception. By the time the pupils leave Year 6, their standards in English, mathematics and science are above average. Achievement is good. These positive outcomes are also linked to the constructive development work of the senior leadership team, well assisted by the teaching and support staff and by the effective governing body.

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, although there are wide variations across the school. Those pupils identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. All pupils are well cared for, guided and supported, although there are some inconsistencies in the use of assessment data and in the guidance pupils receive which helps them to improve their work. The school curriculum is good and often exciting: it is enriched well by a wide range of interesting visits and extra-curricular activities.

Leadership and management have a good awareness of the school's priorities for development and systems for tracking pupils' progress are being reviewed to ensure pupils are sufficiently challenged. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and has the capacity to improve even further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the level of teaching to that of the best in order to ensure that there is a school wide consistency in pupils' learning.
- Improve the use of assessment, marking and tracking systems to ensure a clear understanding of what needs to be done to secure consistent levels of progress and appropriate challenge for all pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well throughout the school. When pupils first enter the Nursery their skills are below those typical for their age, particularly in speaking and listening. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage through a well structured balance of directed activities in which they learn independently. By the time they enter Year 1, the majority are broadly in line with national expectations in most areas of learning. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 2 their standards

are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Good progress overall is sustained through Years 3 to 6 despite a few inconsistencies in teaching. By the end of Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are above the national average. Analysis of pupils' books and teachers' assessment records shows that standards in the current Year 6 are above average. The pupils generally meet the challenging targets set for them. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because of the strong support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils say the best thing about this school is 'everyone'. Their enjoyment in learning together is palpable and their attendance levels are in line with the national picture. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is just one outstanding feature in an aspect that the school thinks is good but which inspectors judge to be outstanding. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils have a very well developed sense of responsibility towards their community in school and in the parish. Following a lesson on 'what would God like us to change' the SPPS (St Philip's Playground Squad) donned their caps and went off, as they put it, 'to help the younger children play well together'. As a result of this excellent example set by the oldest pupils, bullying is rare, though as pupils said 'there may be a bit of falling out'. Because they have a strong sense of their own worth, pupils readily take to heart the plight of others less fortunate and raise funds for local and international causes. Last Christmas they took part in an enterprise week which not only raised much needed funds but also gave the pupils the experience of making and selling their goods. As part of their awareness of healthy eating, the school council started up a fruit tuck shop and can certainly talk knowledgeably about its benefits. Recently, pupils and adults worked together to create a peace garden because pupils felt they need somewhere to be quiet and reflective.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall but lacks consistency across the school. For the most part, pupils are taught in lively and well constructed lessons. High expectations, challenging questions and good pace are key features of the best lessons. In a minority of lessons, these high levels of challenge and expectation are not consistently present and, as a consequence, progress noticeably slows. Additionally, higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged in some lessons. In one Year 2 music lesson, pupils demonstrated high levels of interest and improvisation as they explored sounds associated with the launch of a rocket into outer space: one pupil even thought to suggest - '5, 4, 3, 2, 1, blast off!' Similarly, in Year 6, pupils clearly enjoyed the significant challenges presented to them in solving a range of increasingly complex money problems. Teachers use individual education plans well to organise appropriate tasks for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

With the enthusiastic support and teamwork from classroom assistants, teachers provide all pupils with a safe and secure learning environment, which promotes learning. The marking of pupils' work is not consistently good across the whole school but the best examples, such as written dialogue between teacher and pupil, indicate to pupils how they can improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

One of the reasons pupils do so well is that they have an interesting diet of good learning activities. Each day starts with a physical warm-up, which gets everyone energised and ready for learning. The school's provision for information and communication technology has improved since the last inspection where it was an identified weakness. A lot of emphasis is put on the teaching of basic skills so that pupils are articulate and able to express themselves confidently in front of others. This starts as soon as children enter Nursery and links well with the structured activities that teach them how to learn and play together. Delivery of the curriculum in the classroom does not always challenge higher attaining pupils. However, pupils relish the many good opportunities to play sport, produce music and to make visits to interesting places. Parents feel that a sense of value is instilled into their children, encouraging a feeling of pride, responsibility and discipline. Inspectors would not disagree with these statements.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The calm atmosphere resulting from impeccable behaviour is the best witness to the high level of care and support pupils receive. All statutory requirements are in place for child protection and health and safety. The whole school community is united in striving to remove obstacles and barriers that prevent pupils from doing their best. One parent sums it up well by writing, 'The staff here are not just teachers, they are almost like an extension of the family, they don't just teach, they care.' However, the guidance given to pupils on how well they are doing and, more importantly, what they could do better, is not yet embedded in the culture of the whole school. Some teachers are very good at telling pupils how well they are doing, and pupils sometimes respond in their books with comments to indicate they understand. However, this practice is not widespread.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management at the school are good. The school is currently experiencing some staffing difficulties, which are being managed well by both school managers and members of the governing body. The headteacher and her deputy clearly know the school and their pupils extremely well. They have a clear view of how they want the school to develop and over the past few years have created a successful

working partnership in conjunction with other staff in the school. The school's own self-evaluation accurately identifies its strengths and areas for development. Senior management have rightly targeted the achievement of pupils in Years 3 to 6 as an area for potential improvement and plans are already being implemented towards this objective. The effectiveness of its systems for monitoring and keeping track of pupils' performance, although satisfactory, are not as secure. This does not enable the leadership to be able to strategically allocate resources. As a result, the needs of the higher attaining pupils are not fully met with the right level of challenge. Strong and purposeful leadership, alongside much good teaching, has ensured that standards have been maintained for all groups of learners over recent times.

Parents' and children's views are regularly sought and have influenced changes for the better. Parents say that they are extremely happy with the school and the vast majority feel that their children are making very good progress. The school is working hard with the small minority of parents and carers who do not support the regular attendance of their children. Members of the governing body play a very active part in helping to evaluate the progress that pupils make each year by, for example, examining pupils' work. The headteacher and her deputy, very strongly supported by other staff and governors, have very successfully developed an exciting learning environment in which pupils make good progress.

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

We really enjoyed our recent two day visit to your school. We noticed that you were all very happy and we thought that you worked very hard in your lessons and tried to help your teachers as much as you could. We spoke to many of you in classrooms and around the school and you told us about the many exciting things you are given to do which help you with your learning.

We have told your headteacher, Mrs Forbes, that we think St Philip's is a good school and that children work hard and make good progress in their lessons. You are looked after very well by your teachers and other adults and we very much agree with what one of you told us - 'All the children are made to feel very special.'

We feel that there are just two things which could make the school even better.

- A few of your teachers could make lessons even more enjoyable in order to help you with your learning.
- Your teachers should help you to understand more about what you need to do in order to make even better progress.

Thank you once again for helping to make our visit so enjoyable.