



St Luke's Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111379
LEA Cheshire
Inspection number 278674
Inspection dates 22 March 2006 to 23 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Paul Bamber CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	The Willows
School category	Voluntary aided		Frodsham
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Cheshire WA6 7QP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01928 731721
Number on roll	196	Fax number	01928 731721
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr C Droogan
Date of previous inspection	3 July 2000	Headteacher	Mrs M Coleman

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This average sized school attracts children from a wide catchment area. The majority come from relatively advantaged, predominantly white British backgrounds. There is a lower than average proportion of children who have learning difficulties or use English as an additional language. Attainment on entry is broadly average. Before and after school and holiday care facilities are available on site. The school is very popular and has many more children on roll than at the time of the last inspection.

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 with outstanding features and provides good value for money. The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are good, enabling children to make good progress in the Reception class. Achievement is good throughout the school, with children in Year 6 reaching significantly higher standards than found nationally over the last five years. The school very successfully promotes children's basic skills in reading, writing, number and information and communication technology (ICT). It includes all children fully in its provision. Personal development and well-being are outstanding. Behaviour is excellent. Attendance and punctuality are very good. Children enjoy lessons, responding very well to good quality teaching and an enriched curriculum. There is some outstanding teaching. However, throughout the school, teachers do not provide children with enough opportunities to be more actively involved in their learning. Not all teachers are fully competent or confident in using ICT to its full potential in lessons. The care and support provided for the children are outstanding. This contributes significantly to children's good achievements and their secure sense of well-being, including their ability to stay safe and pursue a healthy lifestyle. The school is very well led by a strong and purposeful headteacher, ably supported by effective senior staff and a challenging governing body. The school has improved well since the last inspection and demonstrates a good capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities for children to discuss, reflect upon and review their learning and to give them more opportunities to make choices about how they will tackle the tasks set for them.
- Enable all teachers to be competent and confident using interactive whiteboards and computers to their full potential to enhance children's learning further.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Overall, children achieve well and attain above or well above average standards throughout the school. Children enter the Reception class with broadly average skills. They make good progress because of effective teaching and support and most enter Year 1 having reached or exceeded the targets set for them. Their achievements are best in language, literacy and number skills and least good in their creative development. The Key Stage 1 assessments in 2005 revealed an improvement in children's achievements compared with the last two years, when standards slipped below their customary above average levels. The current Year 2 is doing even better because of very effective teaching and they are on track to achieve very well in the 2006 assessments. Results in the Year 6 national tests show that children have consistently attained standards significantly above the national average over the last five years. They achieve well in all subjects, maintaining the high standards achieved in Year 2. The school sets very challenging targets for children's performance and

consistently meets these. Children who are gifted or talented, who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, or use English as an additional language all make good progress and achieve as well as other children.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children's personal development and well-being are outstanding. They are very enthusiastic, work hard and thoroughly enjoy lessons. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary. Children very willingly accept responsibility and are cheerful, very polite and helpful. The school council has been very influential in bringing many enhancements to school life. For example, the provision of play boxes for use at lunchtime, a 'buddy' bench and the refurbishment of the children's toilets. Children habitually update the school's website, demonstrating very good basic skills in writing and in ICT. Children make a very positive contribution to the wider community through supporting charities and their involvement in many local events, including carol singing, dance festivals and art work displayed locally. Children understand very well how to keep safe and healthy. In the very well attended cookery club, they learn how to cook healthy food. Children are economically aware through their involvement in managing enterprising events, such as organising and running stalls at the summer fair and entering competitions. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They develop self-esteem and confidence because their different achievements are valued and rewarded. The school has very close links with the church. This promotes the children's sense of spirituality well. The children gain good knowledge and understanding of world religions in religious education lessons. They have a good understanding of other cultures because of the visits out of school and visitors who talk to them. Attendance is very good and children are punctual.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. At its best, it is very challenging and engaging, promoting high standards and considerable enjoyment for children in their learning. Adults and children get on very well together. This results in a positive and purposeful atmosphere in lessons, contributing well to children's achievements and very positive attitudes. Basic skills are taught consistently well and, as a result, children's command of language, their reading, writing and knowledge of number are all of a high standard. Teachers' specialisms are used well to enhance children's achievements in the humanities, music and in ICT. A relative weakness, in otherwise strong and sometimes outstanding teaching, is not providing children with sufficient opportunities to discuss, reflect upon or review their work or to make choices about their learning. Some teachers also lack enough confidence or competence to fully exploit the potential of interactive whiteboards or other technology to enhance learning. The teaching and support provided for gifted and talented children and for those with learning difficulties

and/or disabilities is good, enabling them to achieve well. Children are confident learners, articulate and very capable when given the opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum matches the needs of the children well and is particularly effective in promoting their basic skills and personal development. All statutory requirements are met, including in the Foundation Stage. Work in classrooms is enriched by many opportunities to take part in educational visits. These include visits to local museums and places of educational interest. Effective links with a group of local schools enhance children's achievements in the performing arts. For example, during the inspection children were preparing for a cluster group musical concert. There is a wide range of extra curricular activities available to all children. These include sporting activities, creative arts, and cookery. There are good links with many local organisations and children take part in community activities. Provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very good. Children are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles through eating healthy snacks and lunches and the availability of water in classrooms. The school council has worked very well with the kitchen staff to provide healthy option lunches.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. This is a very caring school where children are highly valued. The involvement of parents and children is very good. Parents appreciate that their children feel secure in school. The arrangements for child protection, risk assessment, health and safety are all in place. The school has very strong links with the pre-school to ensure that children make a smooth transfer to the Reception class. Very effective assessment systems to track children's progress are in place and are used to set challenging targets for them to achieve. Teachers know at what stage each child is and this enables them to plan work that fully matches their needs. Because of the very clear strategies to identify those children who need additional support, these children are very well provided for.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The quality of leadership, management and governance is good. The calm, authoritative leadership of the headteacher, complemented very well by the able deputy headteacher, ensures that staff and children are positively encouraged and enabled to strive successfully for improvements. For instance, the recent changes in the deployment of staff have resulted in higher standards and enhanced provision in Reception and in Year 2. Accurate self-evaluation, rigorous monitoring of performance and the determination to include all children fully in the school's provision, are at the heart of

the good quality of this effective school. In its self-review, the school has modestly underestimated the outstanding quality of children's personal development and of the excellent care, guidance and support it provides. Provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is managed very well. Subject coordinators contribute well to children's high standards, work effectively as a team and provide positive role models for children in their Christian commitment and concern for others. Governors are keenly aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. This places them in a strong position to hold the school to account for its provision. The school responds positively to the views of parents and children; for example, by introducing healthier eating options. Effective and tough action has been taken to reverse the recent dip in standards in Year 2. The school has demonstrated a good capacity to improve by successfully enhancing standards and provision in ICT and in the Foundation Stage 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>	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?	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?	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	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	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	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?	1	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	1	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 for making us so welcome during the day we spent in your school. We really 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 really good about your school and those things we felt it could do a little bit better.

What we liked most about your school:

- your very friendly welcome, how confidently you speak and how well you express your ideas
- you have teachers who are friendly and help you to learn well
- you do so well in your lessons
- your excellent behaviour, good attendance and positive attitudes
- your headteacher knows so well what you need to do even better.

Although we think your school is a good school, there are a couple of things that we feel would make it even better:

- you should be more actively involved in your own learning
- make sure all your teachers are confident in using the whiteboards and computers really well to help you even more with your work.

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