



St Ignatius' Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119610
LEA Lancashire
Inspection number 280610
Inspection dates 17 January 2006 to 18 January 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Dave Byrne

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	St Ignatius' Square
School category	Voluntary aided		Preston
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Lancashire, PR1 1TT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01772 555252
Number on roll	158	Fax number	01772 254834
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Richard Ainscough
Date of previous inspection	4 December 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Adrienne Delaney

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average school that serves an area with high levels of social disadvantage. The children's attainment when they start school in Reception is well below average. A broad mix of ethnic backgrounds is represented and over three quarters of children live in homes where English is not the first language. Around 10% of children are from Traveller backgrounds. A high number of children have learning and behavioural difficulties. Above average proportions of pupils start and leave school at times other than expected.

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 that successfully educates children from a diverse range of backgrounds and educational need. As a result of good teaching and strong, caring management, children achieve well after starting school with attainment that is well below average. Satisfactory provision in the Reception class gives children a secure start whilst in Years 1 to 6 learning accelerates and children make good progress. They achieve particularly well in speaking, reading and science but better use could be made of writing and information and communication technology (ICT) in all subjects. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and racial harmony is excellent. Children love their lessons and, with the exception of some groups of children who take extended leave for cultural reasons, attend school regularly. Children are safe and secure in school and benefit from good support for their personal development. There are particular strengths in the support for children with English as an additional language (EAL) and those with learning and emotional difficulties which contribute to their good achievement. The school is held in high regard by parents, who value the level of communication they receive and the warm, welcoming family atmosphere. The school has experienced many changes since the last inspection and has improved satisfactorily since then. Standards are improving rapidly and given the current management and staffing, the school is well placed to continue to improve. It gives good value for money.

not applicable

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase pupils' progress and standards in information and communication technology.
- Raise standards in writing in all subjects across the curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Although children's achievement is good overall, standards at the end of Year 6 are just below average. After starting school with standards that are well below average, a steady start is made in the Reception class. In Years 1 to 6 children make good progress. They do particularly well in improving their speaking and reading skills which is a key factor in the good achievement of children with EAL and those with learning and behavioural difficulties. The attainment of Traveller children is depressed by extended leave from school but their attainment is still similar to other pupils. Boys tend to do better than girls across the school. Since 2003 standards have rapidly improved. In 2005, the proportion of Year 6 children gaining the expected level was broadly in line with the national average in English, above it in science but just below in mathematics. Only a few pupils however exceeded expectations by achieving the higher level in English or mathematics, which was below the national average. At the end of Year 2, children do well to gain average standards in reading and mathematics

but standards in writing are below average. Across the school, the use of writing and ICT to support learning is below expectations.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Inspectors judged pupils' personal development and well-being to be good. This contradicts the more modest judgement made by the school. Children say learning is 'fun' and that they feel valued as people regardless of their culture, religion or gender. Even though school is very popular among pupils, the rate of absence is high, mainly because of extended leave taken by some children for cultural reasons. Children have positive attitudes to schoolwork, behave well and get on well with each other. There are few instances of racism and children state that arguments or bullying are very rare. Children influence aspects of school life through the school council where their views are taken seriously. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Children celebrate the variety of religious and cultural backgrounds among them and have an outstanding level of respect for others. This is a particular strength of the school, which contributes very positively to the calm, harmonious atmosphere within it. Children know about safe and healthy life choices and like to join in with sporting activities to contribute to their fitness. Their understanding of working together is good and older children show their sensitivity to the needs of younger ones by helping them in the dining hall and the playground. Links with local places of worship of all religions, charity fund raising and visits to elderly residents help to give children a good awareness of the diversity of their local community. Children are satisfactorily prepared for their economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. This is better than the school's judgement of satisfactory. Teachers and support staff show high levels of commitment to their job beyond what is usually found. They believe in the children and work tirelessly as a very close team to meet the diverse range of needs. Children are never bored and therefore enjoy lessons. They respond with great enthusiasm to lively and exciting lessons that are well planned to meet the needs of everyone. Literacy and numeracy are taught well with high, and increasing, expectations for pupils. Not enough use, however, is made of writing to support learning in all subjects. Weakness in resources reduces the chance for ICT to be taught, an issue that the school is in the process of resolving. Teachers have the respect of children and parents alike. Wherever possible, recognition is made of the cultural diversity within each class, for example by studying features of life in Asian communities. As a result, children feel valued and involved in their learning. Assessment is used very well to make sure pupils are given suitably challenging work. Children like the way that the purpose of every lesson is shared with them. As a result, they have a good understanding of what they need to

do to improve. Good links with parents through termly reports on their children's progress and the wise use of homework, add to the quality of children's learning in school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. Even though all statutory requirements are met, not enough is done to maximise the children's use of ICT and writing to support their learning in other subjects. Good provision is made for pupils with EAL and for those who have learning and behavioural difficulties and the provision for English, mathematics and science is good overall. In the reception class, children receive a satisfactory range of suitable activities but limitations of the accommodation reduce opportunities for learning outdoors. The programme for personal, social and health education effectively promotes pupils' personal development and citizenship and awareness of healthy and safe lifestyles. A satisfactory range of visits and visitors enrich the curriculum, but while pupils speak enthusiastically about their involvement in school sports and science clubs, they would like more after school events to develop their creative skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This is an area of strength in the school and is good overall. All child protection, health, safety and other risk assessments work well. Children state that their school is a 'happy, wonderful place to be' and feel safe and secure. Children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties are very ably supported by a skilled learning mentor who also works hard to minimise absence. Outstanding quality of guidance and support for Traveller children and those with EAL makes sure that children make good gains from their education. Effective support, particularly by teaching assistants, results in children with learning and physical difficulties making good progress towards their individual targets. Strong links with education and health professionals successfully provide specialist advice where necessary. Children are closely involved in assessing and evaluating their academic achievements. They confidently talk about what they need to improve and this is a key factor in the children's good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management of the school are good and directly responsible for the good academic achievement and personal development. The headteacher and the acting deputy headteacher have been in post for less than two years. In this time they have created a very strong ethos that values the individuality of staff and children and celebrates the cultural and religious diversity within the community. High levels of inclusion are achieved through the outstanding management of the provision for children with EAL and good management for Traveller children and those with learning

and behavioural difficulties. The school evaluates itself well. All available information, including assessment data, is used to identify areas it needs to improve. These are incorporated into a realistic but ambitious school improvement plan. The management of English and mathematics is good but in ICT it has not been effective in recent years and is an issue recognised by the school. The governing body is very supportive of the school and has played a crucial role in its recent improvement and is currently working hard to maintain its financial viability. Given the strength of the current management team, the school has a good capacity for continued improvement.

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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	3	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	3	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	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	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	3	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?	3	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

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17 January 2006

Dear children

It was a pleasure to join you for two days. We enjoyed talking with you and sharing some of your lessons. There are many things in your school that we think are good. It is impressive the way that you all get on together and do your best to help others. In lessons, you work hard and seem to enjoy learning new ideas and skills. We feel that you are doing well in your studies but we have asked the school to do more to help you to improve your writing and skills of using information and communication technology. It was very pleasing to find in discussions with you, that you really like school and feel part of all that goes on in it.

A lasting memory of your school will be the way that even though there are different religions and cultures, everyone seems to treat each other equally and fairly. In fact, you have a better understanding of other cultures than many other children of your age.

Your school is not good by accident. It is because of the hard work and care of your headteacher, teachers and support staff. They work very hard to give you a good start to life. The school also does a lot to tell your parents and carers about what goes on in the school. Their support is important and is a vital part of the school's success.

We wish you every happiness and success for the future. If you continue to treat others as thoughtfully as you do now, you will be happy and successful in life, but remember, you can always do better!

Yours faithfully

David Byrne and Doreen Davenport (Your school inspectors)