



# St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Great Eccleston

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 119625  
**LEA** Lancashire  
**Inspection number** 280616  
**Inspection dates** 21 June 2006 to 21 June 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Geoffrey Yates

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	St Mary's Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Great Eccleston
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Preston, Lancashire
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01995 670364
<b>Number on roll</b>	27	<b>Fax number</b>	01995 672789
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Patricia Eastham
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 November 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr David Ramsay

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 21 June 2006 - 21 June 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 280616
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

---

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is a very small school situated in the rural village of Great Eccleston, just a few miles from the market town of Garstang. Most pupils live in private housing. The pupils' skills on entry to the school vary but are broadly average for their age. No pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal is below average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

St Mary's is a good school and provides good value for money. This inspection judgement is better than the school's view of itself. Parents and pupils are rightly proud of their school. Pupils' personal development and the care the school provides are both of a good quality and there is a strong Christian ethos. The school is not limited by its small size but sees this as being beneficial to all its pupils who take part in a wide range of out of school activities. The quality of education in the Foundation Stage is good and children attain the goals set for their ages. The quality of the teaching and learning is good. As a result, pupils achieve well and attain standards in English and mathematics which are above those found nationally by the time they leave. However, despite pupils having good mental arithmetic skills, they do not apply them quickly and accurately when asked to solve mathematical problems. The school is well led and managed and benefits from effective governance. In a relatively short period of time, the headteacher has made improvements that have helped to raise standards, especially of higher attaining pupils. While the overall curriculum meets national requirements, the school has rightly recognised that it needs to be reviewed and developed further to better meet pupils' needs. A new assessment and recording system has been implemented and is being used well. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection and is well placed to make further improvements.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure the school's review of the curriculum leads to a focused plan of action that is implemented to improve the quality of provision.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to use their mental arithmetic skills in solving quickly and accurately mathematical problems.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Small cohorts of pupils make year-on-year comparisons unreliable. However, given their starting points, pupils achieve well because they make good progress as they move through the school. The targets set for the end of Year 6 are challenging but pupils are expected to reach them. The school has improved pupils' writing and they use their skills well not only in literacy lessons but also in other subjects. Despite pupils having good mental arithmetic skills, they do not use them well enough when asked to solve mathematical problems. Children enter the Reception class with skills that are broadly average. They make a good start and school records show that by the time they enter Year 1 they achieve what is expected. The children's good start is consolidated and built on in Years 1 and 2 resulting in current standards being above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils also make good progress in Years 3 to 6 resulting in above average attainment in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave. There is no significant difference between the progress of different

groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils of all abilities achieve well and higher attaining pupils are able to achieve their potential.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Personal development and well-being of pupils are good. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work, behave well and have very positive attitudes. They feel safe and secure with adults that they can talk to if they have problems of any kind. Attendance is above the national average. Pupils really like coming to school and show high levels of enjoyment as witnessed before and after taking part in an inter-school swimming gala. Pupils understand the importance of healthy living. They are offered healthy eating options at lunchtime and the school participates in a healthy schools' project. Good overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is provided. The school is right to recognise the need to improve multicultural provision. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to make positive contributions to the community, for example, by being involved in the Great Eccleston Agricultural Show. A good emphasis on learning basic numerical, literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills is laying good foundations for pupils' economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. In this small school, teachers and classroom support staff know the pupils well. Classroom routines, behaviour and organisation of groups are well understood. This enables pupils of different ages and abilities to make good progress within the same class. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to provide personal attention and support, particularly for those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The needs of young pupils are met. In lessons, staff skilfully provide a variety of activities and keep pupils motivated to learn. For example, on a wet Wednesday afternoon, pupils in Years 3 to 6 were all actively involved in making their own versions of Egyptian death masks. This hands-on approach resulted in pupils making good gains in knowledge and understanding about ancient Egyptian customs. Opportunities are sometimes missed in providing pupils with work to enable them to use their good mental arithmetic skills in problem-solving situations. Assessment information is used well when planning future work. Systems for setting targets and tracking pupils' progress are in place but have yet to be fully developed to include individual target-setting.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The school provides a satisfactory quality and range of learning opportunities. There is no duplication and all subjects are covered fully. However, the school has not

undertaken a review of its provision and has yet to take into account recent curricular initiatives to make the curriculum even more relevant to pupils' needs. With very few children in the Foundation Stage, learning experiences are closely monitored to ensure they enjoy a balanced coverage of all areas of learning. Throughout the school, extra-curricular enrichment is outstanding, especially with regard to sporting provision. The school has a good programme of personal, social, health education and citizenship. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to learn to play orchestral instruments. The building and resources have been improved greatly but there is still a need to develop outside provision for children in the Foundation Stage.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school cares for its pupils well. It has a happy, friendly environment and pupils genuinely care about each other. Relationships with parents are good. Parents are very pleased with the way the school cares for all pupils and feel well informed about progress. One parent commented, 'the school works very hard at making each pupil proud of his/her achievements and wishing to achieve more.' Pupils feel safe and trust the staff. They know where to get help and this contributes to their good achievement. Child protection arrangements are good and procedures to ensure pupils' health and safety are clear and understood by all. Overall support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good; individual education plans are fully in place with realistic targets. The school has decided not to have a school council but pupils are consulted about what they would like to see improved. Pupils' academic achievement is closely monitored and teachers have a good awareness of how well pupils are doing.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The school benefits from good leadership and management. Despite the fact that the school has been through some turbulent times, it now provides a good standard of education. This is because the headteacher's clear vision and understanding of the school's priorities have led to school improvement. The capacity for further improvement is good. Governors support the headteacher and the school well and the chairperson has a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The school's own evaluation of itself is too conservative and the school is better than it believes to be the case. There has been a high staff turnover but good teamwork among the present staff has been decisive in managing the successes achieved thus far. Roles are clearly defined and all staff work well. Much is being done to develop the expertise the school needs by encouraging staff onto professional courses. Parents' and pupils' views are sought and both groups think highly about the school. One parent commented 'the headteacher and his staff work extremely hard providing children with a good education in a friendly caring atmosphere.'

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
--	-----------------------	--------------

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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

Alexandra House

33 Kingsway

London

WC2B 6SE

T 0207 421 6800

F 0207 421 6707

Ofsted helpline

08456 404045

The Pupils

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

St Mary's Road

Great Eccleston

Preston

Lancashire

PR3 0ZJ

23 June 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you for helping me during the inspection. I would like to tell you about my findings. You will not be surprised to know that I found your school to be a good school. I enjoyed being with you, watching you learning, looking at your books and talking to you. The list below shows some of the things I liked about your school.

You work hard.

You are polite and get on well with each other.

By the time you leave, you learn to read and use your writing skills well and that will help you to get a good job in the future.

You like the way your headteacher, teachers and other members of staff make learning interesting.

All the adults in school work very hard to care for you.

You enjoy the visits you make to different places and the clubs after school.

We have asked your teachers to look at two things to make your work even better.

To have another look at the way the subjects you learn are organised and to make any changes that might make things even more interesting for you.

To provide you with more challenging opportunities to use your number skills in solving mathematical problems.

Yours sincerely

Geoffrey Yates

Lead Inspector