



Our Lady and St Gerard's Roman Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119639
LEA Lancashire
Inspection number 280622
Inspection dates 14 November 2005 to 15 November 2005
Reporting inspector Mr Gordon Alston

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Lostock Hall
School category	Voluntary aided		Lourdes Avenue
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Lostock Hall, Preston, Lancashire
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01772 335025
Number on roll	284	Fax number	01772 629561
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Ken Palmer
Date of previous inspection	1 May 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Janet Malone

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 14 November 2005 - 15 November 2005	Inspection number 280622
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Our Lady and St Gerard's is a Catholic primary school that serves an area in Lostock Hall, near Preston. The 284 pupils in the school cover the full range of abilities. Children enter the school with skills that are expected for their age and English is the first language of them all. A very small minority of pupils are from minority ethnic heritages. The number of pupils who receive free school meals is well below average, and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school that provides sound value for money. Inspectors differ from the school's view that it is good. Children enter Reception with average standards and, because of good teaching, they achieve above average standards by the time they enter Year 1. Progress is satisfactory in Years 1 to 6 and pupils achieve above average standards at the ages of seven and eleven. Although, over time, national test results have fluctuated, pupils have always achieved satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory with some good lessons. However, more able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. Also, in some lessons, pupils spend too long listening to the teacher and not enough time doing their work. The school sets targets for classes but not for all individual pupils. Therefore, pupils are not always clear how they can improve their work.

Pupils' personal development is good. They feel secure and safe, and they contribute well to the life of the school. Leadership and management are satisfactory and the school has the capacity to improve further. The headteacher knows what needs improving and is moving the school in the right direction. However, most coordinators and other senior managers are not having enough impact on school improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good throughout the school by:
- providing more opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in lessons
- setting all pupils, particularly the more able ones, challenging individual targets for improvement
- improve the monitoring and evaluation of the school's work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards on entry are average. The pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage and standards are above average by the start of Year 1. Standards are above the national average by the time pupils leave the school. Overall, pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress in Years 1 to 6. However, more able pupils do not achieve as well as they should in some lessons. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress and reach the targets set for them.

Generally, the school meets its challenging targets, but this is not always the case for pupils reaching the higher levels. The school is beginning to tackle this problem with closer tracking of individual progress in order to identify the higher attaining pupils earlier. They are now taught in small groups of similar ability in English and mathematics. However, this has yet to have an impact on these pupils' progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The school is right to judge pupils' personal development and well-being as good. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They like their teachers and they are well motivated to learn. They have a positive outlook. Behaviour is good and there are no signs of the minor disruption seen during the last inspection. Pupils are clear about what is right and wrong. They clearly recognise that they are part of a community and that, along with their rights, they have responsibilities. The older pupils show care for others when they act as playground buddies. Attendance levels are good and rising.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. There are strong links with the Catholic Church, and pupils' learning about other faiths is further developed by visits and visitors. Pupils offer their views through the school council. They enthuse about how the school acts on their ideas. The school has recently achieved Healthy School status and pupils reflect this in their keenness to take part in out-of-school activities and bring healthy snacks at break. Pupils develop the basic skills of literacy and numeracy to a good level. They learn to work cooperatively and collaboratively, and as a team. Thus, they have a good basis from which to develop further skills for later working life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, with some good lessons. Where the teaching is good, there is a pace and drive that makes learning exciting. This was seen in a Year 5 numeracy lesson and in work done with the Reception children where role-play and close attention to basic skills of literacy and numeracy are helping the children to make good progress.

However, there are too many lessons where this is not so. Often pupils are passive. They spend too long listening to the teacher and become restless. Although teachers plan carefully and ensure that pupils work hard, there are shortcomings in the teaching of more able pupils. Class targets have recently been introduced in order to set clear expectations of what pupils should achieve, but information from assessment is not yet used to set targets for individual pupils. This is holding back the more able.

Management of pupils' behaviour is good and helps them to behave well. Throughout the school, relationships between adults and pupils are good. This is a key factor in pupils enjoying school. Well-trained teaching assistants provide good support for pupils' learning. Teaching and learning are satisfactory for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets the needs of most pupils. It is enhanced by the teaching of French in Year 6. Extra-curricular provision is good. The Foundation Stage curriculum gives children a good start in school. A new, eagerly awaited outdoor play area will soon be available so children can access a broader range of learning opportunities. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to use their basic skills of literacy and numeracy in other subjects. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily in all subjects. The weakness of the curriculum is in the provision made for more able pupils because in Years 1 to 6 the school does not always plan sufficiently to extend their learning. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is satisfactory.

A programme of personal, social and health education is planned satisfactorily. The Healthy Schools programme prepares pupils well for future life and they learn to share their concerns and look after themselves. Pupils enjoy a wide variety of outings, especially the residential visits and adventurous activities for older pupils. Visitors to the school enhance pupils' learning. There is a wide variety of school clubs. The sports ones are good and well attended.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

This has positive features, although weaknesses in monitoring pupils' progress make it satisfactory rather than good. There are secure and effective child protection and health and safety arrangements.

Staff know the pupils well and are fully committed to their welfare. Adults are positive role models and foster good relationships so that there is no bullying or racism. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are cared for well. The school works closely with external agencies and with parents and carers to ensure that they play a full part in the life of the school.

Assessment and target setting are at an early stage. The headteacher knows that much still needs to be done to enable pupils to know how far they have progressed and how to improve further. Children say they would like a greater say in helping to set their own targets.

Thorough procedures smooth children's start in the Reception class so they settle quickly. The good links with the local high school also ease pupils' transition to the next stage of their education.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school regards them as good. The headteacher has led the school well since her appointment in 2004 and ensures that

it is a caring school. She is beginning to rightly focus the school on raising standards, after having successfully improved pupils' involvement in the life of the school and their behaviour. She is developing school self-evaluation, but not all staff are fully involved in this process. Most coordinators and senior managers do not have enough impact on the development of their subjects. Where standards need improving, coordinators have accurately identified the problem and the measures needed to improve standards. However, although new initiatives have been introduced, a lack of rigorous monitoring has prevented them from helping to improve the teaching and learning. The school has now introduced class targets and with its pupil tracking system is in a position to identify those who are not doing as well as they should and to set targets for them. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

The headteacher seeks the views of parents and pupils and receives positive feedback. Governors know the school well and are developing their role as a 'critical friend'. They are becoming involved in the school self-evaluation process.

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.

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?	3	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	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	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?	3	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?	3	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?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	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	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	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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Our Lady and St Gerard's Roman Catholic Primary school
Lourdes Avenue
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Preston
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16 November 2005

Dear Pupils

I am writing this letter after the two enjoyable days we spent in your school. We want to thank you all so much for making the experience such a pleasurable one. We came to see how good your school was and you did not let the school down in any way. Your friendliness, good behaviour and the way you get on with one another are a credit to you all.

What I particularly liked about your school.

You enjoy school, behave well and help each other a lot.

The school council listens to all your views and helps to make decisions in the school.

You do a lot to stay healthy and safe.

I was pleased to see all the clubs you can attend and how keen you all are to take part in these.

The headteacher and governors know what they need to do to make your school even better.

Your parents like the fact that you attend this school and they think it is a very caring school.

We have asked your teachers to look at the following things to make the school and your progress even better.

To make all the teaching as good as the teaching we saw in the best lessons.

To set individual targets for you so that you and your teachers can check how well you are doing.

To make sure that all your teachers are equally involved in checking on how well your school is performing and helping it to be even better.

Yours sincerely

Gordon Alston

Lead inspector

Annex B

Annex B

Our Lady and St Gerard's Pre-School
Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number

503742

Inspection date

14/11/2005

Childcare inspector

Chris Scully

Setting address

Lourdes Avenue

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Lancashire

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01772 335025

E-mail

Registered person

Our Lady and St Gerard's Pre-School

Type of inspection

Care

Type of care

Sessional care

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Annex A

Annex A

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and

childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the d the care are satisfactory.

The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Our Lady and St Gerard's Pre-school is committee run and registered in 2001. It operates from a pre-fabricated building to the rear of Our Lady and St Gerard's Primary School in Preston. A maximum of 20 children may attend at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday during term time from 12.45 till 15.15. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 24 children aged 3 to 5 years on roll. All of the children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from the local community. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and child who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs three staff. Of these, two staff including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications; one member of staff is to work towards a qualification. The setting is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm clean environment. They learn about personal hygiene through topic work and daily routines. Children understand the need to wash their hands after visiting the toilet independently and before snack times. They are confident to see to their own personal needs with little additional support needed from staff. Children are kept healthy due to the effective sick children policy and clear recording systems for accidents and medication.

Children benefit from regular exercise in the fresh air. In the outdoor area they enjoy free play and planned activities, such as ring games and are confident to use equipment within the school hall when they are unable to play outside. Children move safely and with control within their environment. They use small tools and resources with increasing control such as scissors and

paint brushes, however there are missed opportunities to develop these skills further for example by helping to prepare the fruit and pouring their drinks at snack time.

Children's individual dietary needs and preferences are carefully considered and met after consultation with the parents. They enjoy healthy snacks and are participating in the school's fresh fruit scheme where they are encouraged to eat one piece of fruit a day. Children have a drink at snack time however; they do not have independent access to drinking water. This hinders their ability to identify their own needs and drink when thirsty. Through the introduction of the schools healthy eating policy children are developing an understanding of how to be healthy and to explore new food options for example, children confidently explain that they like bananas but not coconut.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm and bright environment which means they can play in comfort and safety. The room is well organised with specific work areas that encourage children to explore their surroundings. Children have access to a good range of age appropriate resources that stimulate their interests and learning opportunities such as, the role play area which has taken on many forms for example, a shop and Parisian Café. Children's independence is fostered as they freely select their resources and choose where to play. Children are frequently engaged in purposeful play and learning opportunities. Older children are confident to use resources to extend their play for example, one child walked around chatting on her mobile phone which she had made from a building block.

Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised in the well organised environment which has good safety and security procedures in place such as key pads on external doors. Children's safety is enhanced by the use of risk assessments which are carried out daily and the clear systems in place for taking children on outings. The jobs book enables staff to ensure all potential hazards or faults are dealt with quickly and by appropriate persons.

Staff enable children to keep themselves safe through discussion and topic work such as, discussing their safety on bonfire night. Staff instigate visits from outside agencies such as, the fire brigade to talk to the children about fire safety. This is supported by staff who regularly practice the fire drill with the children to ensure they are confident to evacuate the building quickly and safely in an emergency.

Children are protected from harm as the staff have a secure understanding of the child protection systems in place. The child protection policy is detailed with regards to identifying potential abuse and the action staff must take. This is well supported by information such as, the booklet what to do if you are worried about a child and other relevant documentation.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time at the pre-school where they are happy and settled. They play well with their peers and have made firm friends. Children display good levels of independence as they self-select their own resources and choose where to play. They are interested in the range of activities provided and are confident to question visitors on what they are doing and why are they using a laptop. Staff in turn ask questions that promote children's thinking, communication and problem solving skills. Plans are in place to incorporate the elements of the Foundation Stage and to provide children with a balanced range of activities to promote their learning.

Children feel safe and secure in their environment due to the development of warm caring relationships with staff. The clear key worker system enables staff to identify and meet children's individual needs, and to liaise with the parents and other staff. The children receive appropriate levels of support that enables them to feel safe and explore new experiences, such as examining snakes, tarantulas and land snails when the bug man visits. Staff spend time talking and listening to children this means their learning opportunities are enhanced. Children have good opportunities become fully engaged in purposeful play and learning experiences such as small world where they build their train track and go on a journey.

Children enjoy a range of role play scenarios such as the Parisian café where they explored the culture, food and style of the café and Paris. They enjoy art and craft activities such as making salt dough hedgehogs and talking about autumn, however there is an imbalance between the range of adult and child led displays within the room. This is compounded by the excessive use of templates for example the little red hen, this means children's free expression and creativity is not successfully fostered within the displays. There are some examples of children's free art displayed for example observational drawings in the foyer, however these are not at the children's eye level and does not emphasise the value put upon their work.

Children are becoming confident speakers who enjoy talking with visitors and their peers at circle time. Children are confident to participate in a variety of songs and enjoy action songs for example the wheels on the bus. They are developing an understanding that print carries meaning from the range of texts around the room and the well resourced library area that is frequently visited by the children, who are developing an understanding of the pleasure of reading books.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff build warm caring relationships with the children that enable them to feel safe, confident and valued at the pre-school. Staff are skilled at obtaining information from parents about the children's individual needs and preferences through discussions and the all about me booklet which enables them to provide appropriate care. Open days are held during the summer term for existing parents where they can discuss their child's progress in detail and look at their child's individual file.

Children learn about the world in which we live through a range of planned activities throughout the year for example acknowledging Diwali and Chinese New Year. This means children are developing a positive attitude to others. Children gain an awareness of their local environment through topic work, and from visits by people from the local community to talk about their role with the children for example, the fire brigade and lollipop person.

Children are generally well behaved and are developing an understanding of the pre-school rules. They are developing an understanding of turn taking and of the need to share resources for example; one child explained to his friend it is your turn for the tractor now. Staff are positive role models who encourage children to be polite, use appropriate manners and show respect for one another by listening to what each other has to say. The behaviour policy is effectively shared with the parents and staff however, it does not contain information on bullying and any action the pre-school will take to minimise the effects of this and the support provided. Clear systems are in place to support children with special educational needs. This means staff liaise closely with parents and other agencies to ensure all of their needs are met.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Staff communicates verbally on a daily basis with the parents to inform them of their child's day, progress and any concerns they may have. Staff are committed to working in partnership with the parents to resolve issues and provide effective

support to children. Parents receive regular newsletters which keep them informed of future topics and how they can be involved in their child's learning such as providing additional resources for interest tables.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from a well organised environment where they can move freely and explore the different areas. Good use is made of room dividers to identify various work areas such as the role play and messy play consequently, children enter the setting happily and choose where they wish to play. The children are well supported by qualified staff who are aware of their individual needs. Children have a sense of belonging. They greet each other cheerfully and call one another to participate in play activities. They are confident with the daily routines and know the format of the session for example they explain to visitors that after tidy up time it is snack time.

All legally required documentation is in place and is well maintained although, confidentiality is not adhered to within the incident record. Clear systems are in place to ensure children's accidents are dealt with appropriately for example, a number of staff hold relevant first aid qualifications. Policies and procedures are shared effectively with the staff and parents who all sign to say they have read, understood and comply with the policies, although there are some omissions such as bullying. Recruitment and induction systems are in place however these are not rigorously applied as references are not always undertaken on staff.

The effective key worker systems works well in practise and provides good support to both the child and their family. Staff have good opportunities to participate in training courses such as Key worker systems, Maths in the Foundation Stage and Senco training to extend their skills and knowledge, and enhance the care learning and play opportunities provided to children. Overall, the needs of all the children are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

The setting has successfully addressed the two recommendations from the last inspection. They have revised the lost and uncollected child policy to include the procedures should a child fail to be collected from the setting. They have instigated a register for staff to show when they are present and have extended this to the children's register to show when they have arrived late or gone home early. The completion of these recommendations has improved the safety and well being of the children

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report. The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the daycare are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the careday care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendations:

ensure children have free access to drinking water

provide a balance between adult led and children's free art to ensure children are fully involved and their creativity and free expression is successfully fostered

revise the induction procedures to ensure they are robust, ensure all information within the incident record is recorded effectively to maintain confidentiality, and revise the behaviour management policy to include bullying.

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