



St Teresa's Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119695
LEA Lancashire
Inspection number 280637
Inspection dates 17 January 2006 to 18 January 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Eric Jackson

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	College Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Up Holland
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Skelmersdale, Lancashire
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01695 623842
Number on roll	198	Fax number	01695 623842
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Canon J Darcy
Date of previous inspection	1 May 2000	Headteacher	Mr Peter Atherton

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Teresa's is a slightly smaller than average Catholic primary school, with 207 children on roll. There are fewer than average children with learning difficulties/disabilities. Few children, none of whom are learning English as an additional language, are from minority ethnic backgrounds, and few take free school meals. Children's attainment on entry to reception is broadly average. The school is in a local schools' Network Learning Community, and has Investors in People 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 the school's own view that it is good. Good improvements have been made since the last inspection, and the school is well placed to improve further. It provides good value for money.

Good, well managed procedures involving all staff monitor and evaluate the school's work. Where areas for development are identified they are tackled with good effect, as in promoting healthy lifestyles. However, improvement planning is not clear enough, nor does it always specify who is directly accountable for the outcome of actions taken.

The calm but purposeful atmosphere for learning promoted by the headteacher and staff leads to very strong working relationships with children and their families. This partnership produces good, and sometimes outstanding, achievement and high standards by Year 6. Effective links with the local authority and other local schools also add well to the quality of education.

Provision in the reception class is excellent, so that children achieve above average standards by the time they enter Year 1. Children also make very rapid progress in Year 6. Teaching and learning have improved to be good in Years 1 and 2, and they are also good with some outstanding features in Years 3 to 6.

Children enjoy their learning tremendously, and say that they love the school. Staff ensure that all children are safe, and include them fully in all the wide-ranging activities provided. Children's personal development is good, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.

What the school should do to improve further

Staff with management responsibilities should:

- evaluate monitoring information more carefully to determine precise and clear priorities for action
- be more clearly accountable for the effect of action taken to improve standards and the quality of education.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good, and outstanding in the reception and Year 6 classes. The school meets challenging targets for its children so that standards are consistently high by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. A higher than average proportion of the children reach above expected levels. Girls and boys are equally on track to do well in Year 6 currently, building well on their prior attainment.

From average attainment at entry, almost all children reach the levels expected by the end of reception. An above average number exceed these levels. Year 2 children currently achieve above average levels in reading, writing, mathematics and science. This improvement in standards since last year is the result of more focused teaching.

Children with learning difficulties/disabilities make good progress towards the targets set for them. Able, gifted and talented children make good and sometimes excellent progress in their learning.

Boys' achievement in writing last year was lower than expected. Action taken to improve this has been effective, and a high proportion of boys have improved their writing skills well this year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children's personal development is good, and in some aspects outstanding. Children say that they really enjoy coming to school, and parents agree. Children are eager to take part in all activities, and have good attitudes to their learning. Children's independence and personal development in reception is exceptional. Attendance is satisfactory.

Behaviour is good as the children respond well to the staff's high expectations. The school's strong Christian ethos and positive values generate good spiritual development, an improvement since the last inspection. Moral and social development is outstanding, and cultural development is good.

Children learn effectively how to keep safe. Younger children are enthusiastic that their older 'buddies' help them if they have difficulties. Staff place a high priority on developing healthy lifestyles. The school is committed to achieving 'Healthy School' status, successfully encouraging children to eat healthily and walk to school. Children play a full part in community and parish activities. They learn basic skills well and learn to cooperate effectively, preparing them well for the next stage of education, and for the world of work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good, and sometimes outstanding. Teachers and support staff foster good working relationships with children and one another. They show respect for the children in setting high standards for themselves in planning and delivering good quality lessons and activities.

The staff all have good subject knowledge, particularly in English, mathematics and science, and use it to promote good learning. Some of the marking in children's books is inspirational. Staff reward good work very well to encourage the children, but also point out what is weak, and how to improve. The staff also help the children to understand how to improve by assessing their own progress, and sharing their learning goals. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are challenged to achieve detailed targets.

Teaching in reception and Year 6 is exciting and makes sure children with different levels of knowledge, understanding and skills make rapid progress across the curriculum. The staff grab and hold the children's attention by organising interesting and highly challenging learning tasks and encouraging independence. For example, reception children stunned visiting teachers when they calmly dispersed to different areas, settling purposefully to a wide variety of pre-arranged tasks.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Curricular provision is good, so that children of all abilities progress and learn as well as possible. It meets all statutory requirements and is well-structured. In reception, children enjoy a rich and interesting diet of learning experiences. In Years 1 to 6, cross-curricular skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) are used well to support work across subjects. Homework also adds significantly to the breadth of the children's learning.

The staff enhance all children's experiences well through visits to such places as the JJB Sports Stadium, and by commissioning interesting visitors such as 'the insect man' or a skilled potter. Links with other local schools and the local authority, developments in sport, writing, ICT, music and healthy living also improve the planned curriculum. A good range of extra-curricular activities is well attended. Since the last inspection, the staff have added significant elements in art and design, music, history and geography to widen children's spiritual and cultural understanding effectively.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Children are safe and secure. Parents feel very happy about their children's security in the school. Required health and safety procedures and risk assessments are all in place and effective. Child protection measures are strong and thoroughly understood by the staff.

Support for children's personal development is good, with good opportunities for independence and taking responsibility for aspects of school life, such as being prefects in Year 6. Year 2 children said, 'We really enjoy the jobs like giving letters out, or helping with the register.'

Academic support and guidance are good, and sometimes excellent, as in the marking of English books in Year 4. Assessment information is used very effectively in planning new learning experiences in lessons and to keep staff, children and their parents up-to-date about all children's progress and achievement. Year 6 children say that they all know their learning targets in English and mathematics. The targets are very effectively supported by guidance provided by displays in the classroom, or directly in children's books.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The focus is firmly on raising standards, and promoting children's personal development. The headteacher ensures that the ethos of the school complies with its Catholic mission. That mission is alive and effective here, and all staff support the headteacher in working to fulfil it. Good improvements have been made since the last inspection, including to the school grounds. The staff are capable of working to improve the school's provision further, and to maintain the good value for money provided.

The school's self-evaluation is accurate, and is supported well by the local authority and surveys of parents' and children's views. The self-evaluation recognises the school's many strengths and few weaknesses effectively, partly because subject leadership is now effective in identifying them. However, planning to translate the identified information into written priorities for improvement is not clear enough. For example, staff's accountability for the success of planned actions is not effectively detailed.

Staff with nominated responsibilities carry them out diligently and effectively. Planned developments focus on all children receiving their entitlement to the best education the school can provide, leading to good achievement for almost all children and excellent achievement for those in reception and Year 6.

Governance is good. It has improved since the last inspection, especially in monitoring the effect of spending decisions. Governors oversee the school's work effectively, and ensure that available resources are deployed well. For example, they are aware that the support staff make a good contribution to children's learning. Governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met, and that strong staff are appointed when vacancies occur.

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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	1	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?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	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	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	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

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17 January 2006

Dear Children

Mrs Evans and I want to thank you for being so friendly to us when we visited your school. We felt very welcome, and enjoyed talking to you and seeing how well you work. We were very impressed by your lovely grounds, and know that you older children can't wait for the extra climbing equipment in your play area.

As you know, our job is to check how well your school helps you to learn. You told us that the staff work really hard to make your learning interesting, and that your school is 'Well good'! So did your parents, but they said 'Very good'.

We agree with you, and your parents. St Teresa's is a school to be proud of because it gives you a good education, and some of it is excellent. We were really impressed by what you do. It made us wish we could go back to school ourselves!

We liked the way you try to do what you are asked to do, work hard and behave yourselves (most of the time). You certainly know more about healthy living than we did at primary school.

The staff are always trying to make learning better for you at St Teresa's. We have asked them to make sure that the plans they make to do this are clear and easy to check. You can help by telling them what you think about how things could be better, and helping them to make the improvements.

With best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

Mr JacksonMrs Evans

Lead Inspector Additional Inspector

Annex B

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