



# St Filumena's Catholic Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 124350  
**LEA** Staffordshire  
**Inspection number** 281698  
**Inspection dates** 7 March 2006 to 8 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Andrew Cook HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Caverswall
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Stoke-on-Trent
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Staffordshire ST11 9EA
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01782 392367
<b>Number on roll</b>	174	<b>Fax number</b>	01782 392367
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Rev. James McInerney
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 November 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Michael Wheatley

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 7 March 2006 - 8 March 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 281698
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

This is a school of below average size. The proportion of children eligible for school meals is much lower than the national average, as is the number of children identified as having learning difficulties and disabilities. Almost all of the children are of White ethnic origin and there are no children who speak English as an additional language. The school had a fire in February 2006 and during the time of the inspection was having to use the school hall for two classroom areas.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

The overall effectiveness of the school is good. The Christian aims of the school permeate throughout and ensure the school is a calm, caring place. Children's behaviour is good; they enjoy school and this helps them to learn.

Sound provision in the Reception class ensures that the progress children make is satisfactory. By the end of Year 2 they have continued to make satisfactory progress and have reached broadly average standards. Over the last five years the standards children reach at the end of Year 6 have varied but have often been above average, showing that, overall, children make good progress.

Teaching overall is good. It is well established in Years 5 and 6 and the school is effectively supporting teachers so that good teaching becomes more consistent in all year groups. The school has begun to more formally evaluate teaching and has plans to make this more rigorous. The use of targets for children in English, mathematics and science is developing but more work needs to be done to fine tune them so that children always know their targets and what they have to do to achieve them. Likewise, the comments children are given in their books do not always help them understand what they could do to improve.

The leadership and management of the school are good. There is a strong team spirit. The school has made good progress since the last inspection, has an accurate perception of its strengths and weaknesses, and has good capacity to improve further. The school provides good value for money.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that good teaching is consistent across the school through support and sharing good practice.
- Further develop the use of targets and the comments given in children's books so that children make even better progress.
- Ensure the plans for more rigorous evaluation of teaching are implemented.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good overall and children reach above-average standards. Most children start school in the Reception class with broadly average abilities. They make satisfactory progress in the Reception class and finish the year reaching average standards. Over the last three years the standards reached by children by the end of Year 2 have fluctuated. The children who were in Year 2 in 2005 made at least satisfactory progress and reached average standards, although more able children could have done better and only a few reached above- average test results.

By the end of Year 6 children often reach above-average standards, meeting the challenging targets set by the school. In the Year 6 English tests in 2005 standards were above average and children had made good progress. The picture for mathematics

in 2005 was not as good as English; most of the children reached average standards and had made satisfactory progress. In science the picture was different again; the amount of progress made by children and the standards they reached dipped. These results bucked a trend of four years of above-average standards and good progress. Work in children's science books shows that Year 6 children are now on course to achieve standards more typical for the school.

There is evidence that the school's work to ensure teaching is consistently good across the school is helping children, including those with learning difficulties, to make good progress overall.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Children's moral, social and cultural development is good. Spiritual development is very good, fostered well by the school's Christian ethos. Children enjoy school, and they talk positively about lessons and how helpful teachers are. Attendance is very good and children's behaviour is good. Those classes working in the hall as a result of the recent fire have adjusted very well to their new environment, despite potential distractions.

Children are encouraged to lead healthy lifestyles through lessons. They are right to consider that their school meals are well balanced and that they take a good deal of exercise. They have a good understanding about how to stay safe. For example, Year 6 children talked clearly about the range of potential hazards they learned about on a recent out-of-school visit.

Children make a good contribution to the local and wider communities, including raising money for the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development. The school council is proud of its work and says categorically, 'Our opinions count'. Children are prepared well for the future. They develop good literacy and numeracy skills and information and communication technology (ICT) skills have improved since the last inspection. They take on responsibilities willingly, for example, those associated with the Eco-schools award.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning overall are good. Good teaching is more established in Years 5 and 6, although through effective support and guidance, good teaching is becoming more consistent across the school. In good lessons teachers make sure the children know what they are expected to learn in the lesson, children are challenged appropriately and make good progress. In some lessons, where children make satisfactory progress, teachers miss opportunities to challenge children to have a go at work that will accelerate their progress.

Teachers' planning is mostly good. The school effectively uses teachers' subject knowledge, especially in the way that some teachers teach a subject to more than one year group. This effective organisation enables teachers to know the children well and ensures lessons keep building on what children learn from year to year.

The very good relationships between adults and children throughout the school foster a positive environment for children to learn in. Children's good behaviour helps them to concentrate and complete the work they are given. Good use is made of teaching assistants who support children with learning difficulties.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. Work is generally well matched to children's needs. Statutory requirements are met and the curriculum is enriched by a good level of visits and visitors. French is taught to children in Years 3 to 6 and this is a good addition to the range of subjects the children learn. The curriculum provides opportunities for children to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. There is a particular strength in the way that boys are encouraged to improve in English. The school ensures that the curriculum helps pupils to learn how to be healthy and stay safe, and discussions with pupils reveal how well these hit home. There is also a good range of out-of-school clubs, including many sporting activities, much appreciated by the children. Improvements to the curriculum since the previous inspection mean that ICT is used more widely.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides good care, guidance and support. Procedures for child protection and ensuring safety are in place. Teachers know all children well and are committed to their welfare and progress. They effectively encourage children to be healthy and stay safe. Children say that there are few incidents of bullying or other oppressive behaviour but they are fully confident that any such incidents are quickly and effectively dealt with. This level of care and support is fully recognised by parents and carers. The quality of targets set for children to support the progress they make is inconsistent. In the best cases, targets offer a good level of challenge and are regularly revisited. A strong feature is when children analyse their previous targets, whether they have met these and where the evidence for this can be found. This helps them to understand how well they are learning. Sometimes, however, targets are too general and difficult to measure. Some children are not clear about these targets and how they will achieve them. Marking sometimes offers useful information about how well the work has been done and what the child needs to do next. However, some marking lacks this information or advice is not followed.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The effectiveness of leadership and management is good. The headteacher leads the school well and is committed to its Christian ethos and the way in which the school cares for and encourages children. He, along with other members of the leadership team, provides good management, as demonstrated in the way the school was organised following the recent fire, which put two classrooms out of action.

Over the last two years the school has had to adjust to a turnover of staff and is re-establishing a consistency of good teaching. To achieve this, the school has begun to evaluate how well lessons are taught and the progress children make, as shown in their work. These checks result in helpful advice for teachers and this has improved teaching. The school has rightly identified the need to make this ongoing evaluation more rigorous so that the impact on improving teaching is even greater.

The school has effectively evaluated how well it is doing and has actively sought, and responded to, the views of children and parents. The satisfactory school improvement plan is detailed but lacks a sharp focus on making actions measurable. The governors are very supportive of the school. They appreciate that the school could be even better in some areas and are working with the headteacher to achieve this. The school has made good progress since the last inspection, having improved standards in ICT. The work done to improve the overall quality of teaching and learning shows the school has a good capacity to improve further.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### 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	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

<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>	2	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	3	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	NA
<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**

I am writing to thank you for making Mr Martin and I so welcome when we came to visit your school. We know that because of the fire some of you were having to cope with different classrooms and different dinner times. We think you were doing this really well and your behaviour was very good. We also thought that you were working hard, looking after each other and making sure that the school is a friendly place to be in. We think your teachers are doing a good job, teaching you all sorts of exciting things and helping you to enjoy your lessons and make progress.

We have had a long chat with Mr Wheatley and we have thought of some things that could make your school even better. Here they are:

- Make sure that every single lesson is exciting so that children learn quickly.
- Make sure that children understand the targets they have for English, mathematics and science and that they help children get better at their work.
- Make sure teachers write good comments in children's books so the children know what they have to do to improve.
- Every now and then teachers should watch each other teach so that they can share good ideas.