



St Catherine's C E Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 132785
LEA Bolton
Inspection number 282293
Inspection dates 17 May 2006 to 18 May 2006
Reporting inspector Ms Suzi Clipson-Boyles HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Greenstone Avenue
School category	Voluntary aided		Horwich
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Bolton BL6 5SJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01204 332 636
Number on roll	233	Fax number	01204 332 637
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr M Llyod
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mrs A Duckworth

Age group 3 to 11	Inspection dates 17 May 2006 - 18 May 2006	Inspection number 282293
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: 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 one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

St Catherine's opened in June 2003 as a Church of England aided 3 to 11 school. Pupils and staff previously attended the former 4 to 11 Church of England controlled school on a Victorian site close by. The school is of average size and the pupils are drawn from varied types of housing across a wide area. The attainment of the children on entry is broadly average. The range covers well below to well above the usual ability levels for this age. The number of pupils eligible for a free school meal is slightly higher than average. There are very few pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The majority of the pupils are white British and there are more boys than girls.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school provides a good standard of education. Self-evaluation is mainly accurate, apart from specific aspects that inspectors judge to be outstanding rather than good. The transfer to new buildings was managed efficiently and the school has maintained its clear focus on teaching and learning. The headteacher and deputy are very effective. They involve all members of the school community in evaluating how well the school is doing. This provides regular challenges so the capacity for continuous improvement is good. Staff are highly committed and work together as a strong team.

Pupils make good progress throughout the school due to the quality of the teaching. Assessment of work guides pupils forward towards ever new and challenging targets. However, some of more able pupils are capable of even higher achievement. Standards in all subjects are higher than average. In art standards are only satisfactory as there are insufficient opportunities for more individual creativity. National test results generally continue to rise each year. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and standards are broadly average by the end of Reception. The provision in the Nursery is outstanding.

All pupils are cared for extremely well. They enjoy school, and their behaviour is excellent. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive and they receive extremely good guidance and support on how well they are doing and what they need to learn next. This leads to outstanding personal development. The governing body is very well run and supportive. However, governors do not currently monitor standards in all subjects. Money is carefully spent and the school is well resourced.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities within the timetable for creativity and expression in art.
- Ensure that the more-able pupils are reaching their full potential all the way through the school.
- Develop systems for governors to monitor standards across the whole curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Most pupils achieve well and many reach high standards. Results continue to rise each year throughout the school. The majority of children start Nursery with average abilities, although there are also some who are above and some below the expected levels for their age. They receive an excellent start through enjoyable activities that help them develop skills and understanding across all areas of learning. Very good foundations are also laid here in important social skills. By the end of the Reception year, all children have made considerable progress and around one third exceed the learning goals expected for their age. Good progress continues during Years 1 and 2 so that pupils attain above average standards in the national reading, writing and mathematics tests.

The more able pupils do particularly well in reading, but they could achieve even higher results in writing and mathematics. By the time pupils reach Year 6 standards are significantly above the national averages in English, mathematics and science. English is especially good, and boys achieve well, although the girls are still ahead. In other subjects, standards are also good. For art they are satisfactory. Pupils meet the challenging targets that are set by the school in their work. The minority of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress overall.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being are outstanding. Parents are full of praise for this aspect of the school's work. Behaviour is exemplary in lessons and in the playground. Pupils are very confident, polite and helpful and there is a wonderful atmosphere of respect throughout the school. They enjoy school and this is reflected in the good levels of attendance. The pupils know how to make healthy choices at lunchtime. They understand the importance of exercise and many take advantage of the extensive sporting opportunities offered after school. Pupils talk unprompted about health and safety issues when the need arises, and they say they do feel safe.

Nursery children put away toys and park bikes carefully. Older children have many extra responsibilities, for example looking after younger ones at lunchtime. The school council is very active and contributes greatly to the school community. They presented an assembly during the inspection to talk to everyone about the new suggestions box and how it would operate. They handled this skilfully and thoughtfully.

Social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. In the Nursery, young children are able to talk about their feelings. They continue to develop good awareness of their feelings and know how to control them. Pupils have an awareness of other religions and cultures and know the importance of tolerance towards others. No racist incidents have taken place during the last year.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive. Strong relationships between teachers and pupils in all classes mean that pupils want to work hard. Lessons are carefully planned to capture their interest and help them learn at the right level. Pupils concentrate well in lessons. One very positive feature of teaching is that pupils assess their own learning. This enables useful discussions with their teacher about what they need to do next to improve. They always aim to meet their targets, though some of the more able pupils could be aiming even higher, especially in Key Stage 1. Marking of pupils' work is of a very high quality. Some examples of outstanding teaching and learning were seen. For example, a music lesson showed standards to be exceptionally high as Year 3 pupils used technical language, read music

and played instruments. Teaching assistants are used effectively to help pupils learn. Special strategies and resources are used when appropriate. For example, books and themes that are of particular interest to boys who are reluctant to read and write have had a positive impact on standards in English. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well catered for in a variety of ways. Extra support plus the right amount of challenge help ensure they make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good with some strong features. All pupils are provided with a balanced curriculum that is enriched with additional opportunities. For example, lively French lessons are taught by a teacher from the local high school. Teachers use visits and visitors to make pupils' learning more interesting. Good provision for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology provides pupils with the basic skills for life. Teachers often relate the learning to real-life situations to help make this link. In art, the skills are well taught, but the pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their own creative ideas into larger projects. The pupils' good personal development owes much to a strong programme of personal, social and health education. Dedicated staff offer many after school activities for all ages. Physical education and music are particularly well-catered for. These clubs and others are well attended and enjoyed by the pupils. The Foundation Stage provides an exciting range of experiences that help the pupils to make good progress in all aspects of their learning. The provision in Nursery is outstanding.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Provision in this area is exemplary. Staff are united in providing the very highest levels of care, support and guidance. This applies to pupils' well-being and also to their academic progress. As a result, pupils feel secure and happy. They are clear about how they are doing in their work and are able to discuss and agree what steps they need to take next to improve. As a result, they make good progress. The school provides a safe environment with very good security. Lunchtime staff work extremely well to provide a happy and stimulating time at midday. Systems for keeping pupils safe are regularly reviewed, and any pupils who may be particularly at risk for any reason at any time are identified, supported and monitored. The school works very well with parents and other partners to ensure that all pupils make good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

This school is very well led and managed. The highly effective leadership of the headteacher results in good outcomes for the pupils in all areas of school life. Systems run like clockwork in the school and everyone is clear about what is expected. Communication is therefore excellent between staff, pupils, parents and governors.

The headteacher gathers the views of everyone in order to assess what the school is doing well and what needs to improve next. The result is that staff are continuously developing and improving for the benefit of the pupils. The headteacher is very well supported by the deputy who also makes a significant contribution to the high quality of this school. In particular she has developed excellent assessment and tracking systems which help standards to continue rising. Members of the strong staff team have high expectations of the pupils and of themselves. As a result, pupils know that they must always try their best in their work and in the way they behave. A special ethos of caring is present throughout the school due to the expectations of the headteacher.

Governors are extremely well organised and supportive to the school. During the period of building and change-over they were a source of great strength to staff. They do visit the school to watch lessons but there are no regular systems in place to monitor and challenge standards in all areas of the curriculum.

Parents praise the school in its work and appreciate the high levels of education and care that their pupils receive. The school is well regarded in the local community.

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
--	-----------------------	--------------

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	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	NA	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?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	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?	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?	1	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	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

Thank you very much indeed for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. Mr Blackburne and I enjoyed our two days of inspecting because there was such a friendly atmosphere! You were very polite and helpful to us in all sorts of ways and we are very grateful.

We think that St Catherine's is a good school and in some ways it is outstanding. We saw so many things to praise that we don't have room for them all in this letter! However these are the ones that we think make the most difference to you.

- Your teachers and teaching assistants help you to make good progress all the way through school. They talk to you about what you need to do next in your work and this helps you move onwards with your learning.
- You do well in your tests at the end of Year 2. By the time you get to Year 6 you have made so much progress through the school that your standards are very high, especially in English.
- Your behaviour really is excellent! You are polite and sensible, and you are not afraid to talk about your ideas and opinions especially if there is a health and safety issue. We also noticed how kind and helpful you are to each other, and that impressed us very much.
- The indoor and outdoor activities at the Nursery are lots of fun but they also help the children to learn well.
- Mrs Duckworth and Mrs English-Mather are forever looking for new ways to make your school even better. They see what you have done well, but they are also honest about what needs to improve. They listen to everyone's views so important things are not missed. Then they make careful plans on what needs doing next, like special training on new ideas for the teachers.
- You tell us that you enjoy school and we saw that you have very positive attitudes to lessons and don't have too many days off!
- You are very good at making healthy choices. For example, you choose fruit and vegetables at lunchtime and stay after school to do lots of extra sport!

There are three things that we think the school can do to help you even more. Firstly, we would like you to have the chance to develop more of your own creative ideas in art. Secondly, we think that some of you can do even harder work. Thirdly, we would like your school governors to look more closely at what you do in school in all your subjects. We hope these suggestions will help Mrs Duckworth in the next stages of her planning with all the staff.

We hope that you all continue working as well as you have been so that the school remains at least as good as it is now. We send our very best wishes to you all for a happy and successful future.