



# St John Fisher Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

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Better  
education  
and care

**Unique Reference Number** 103713  
**Local Authority** Coventry  
**Inspection number** 286731  
**Inspection dates** 23–24 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Ian Knight

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Kinton Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Coventry
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11		CV2 3NR
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	024 76443333
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	393	<b>Fax number</b>	024 76650236
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Robert Wright
		<b>Headteacher</b>	K G Fowler
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 February 2007		

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<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
5–11	23–24 January 2007	286731

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This large primary school serves the area of Wyken, to the north of Coventry city centre. Most pupils are White British, with small numbers of pupils of Indian or mixed heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is about average, although the number with statements of special need is low. Few pupils are eligible for free school meals. Last term, the headteacher and one deputy headteacher were seconded, part-time, to another local school while it appointed a substantive headteacher. Children enter the Reception classes with broadly the expected range of skills and knowledge.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The sincere paternal leadership of the headteacher has resulted in a school with a strong Catholic ethos in which all members of the school family are valued as individuals. Teachers develop pupils' zest for learning. Pupils respond by behaving impeccably and working enthusiastically, really enjoying themselves. As a parent commented, 'My children are always eager to retell their day.'

Good provision in Reception ensures children reach above-average standards and achieve well. This good progress continues through the rest of the school. Standards in Year 2 have been improving over a period of time and are now above average, and exceptionally high in writing. Pupils in Year 6, however, did not do this well when they were in Year 2 and have achieved well to reach average standards. A significant factor in the good progress in the school is the good personal development of pupils. They work together enthusiastically and show great care and consideration for others. These characteristics are developed alongside the skills of English, mathematics and information and communication technology to prepare pupils well for the world of work. Pupils have a well-developed understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and know well what they should do to keep safe. This is all fostered by the school's good care, guidance and support. The school had identified that tasks were not always varied enough to meet the needs of individuals, especially in mathematics in the infants. The school addressed this effectively and now good teaching that is matched closely to pupils' needs ensures that all, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, are challenged at the right level throughout the school. This good teaching is founded on the good curriculum that is enhanced by a variety of visits, sporting and artistic activities and the opportunity to experience other languages, including Mandarin Chinese!

Good leadership ensures that all staff share the headteacher's vision for the school in which pupils learn and grow in their faith in a bright, stimulating environment. When weaknesses are noted, effective action follows. However, the school's self-evaluation procedures, whilst satisfactory, are not robust enough to make efficient use of the wealth of assessment and other data to identify areas to develop. The secondment of the headteacher and a deputy headteacher for much of last term to a neighbouring school had an impact on the process of school improvement planning, which lacks coherence and clear measures by which the success of actions taken can be evaluated. Nevertheless, the maintenance of good achievement and the successful action taken to improve mathematics provision in the infants indicate the school has a sound capacity for further improvement. The governing body is supportive and knows the school's strengths and weaknesses, but it relies on the headteacher and other staff for its information.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the use of assessment and other data to identify priorities for action.
- Ensure that improvement plans have clear criteria by which success can be measured and involve the governing body more in the planning and monitoring processes.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Good provision in Reception ensures that children make good progress and achieve well. They are well prepared for the rigours of the National Curriculum as they enter Year 1.

In the past, the most capable pupils in the infants did not make rapid enough progress in mathematics, and progress in writing was patchy. The school addressed these areas and the standards in National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 2 in 2006 were above average in all areas and exceptionally high in writing, representing good achievement. Standards in National Curriculum tests in 2006 for pupils in Year 6 showed standards were broadly average. Nevertheless, these pupils achieved well because they reached standards that were below average in the infants and have subsequently made good progress.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities receive focused support in class and consequently also make good progress. Many pupils take advantage of the numerous musical opportunities offered, and, for example, the quality of singing is high; the choir rehearsed during the inspection producing a beautiful wash of harmonies.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils really enjoy school and have very positive attitudes to learning. They behave excellently, respect others and move around the school with purpose and consideration. Attendance is satisfactory and pupils are keen to arrive on time.

Pupils have a good awareness of the need to adopt healthy lifestyles and know what they should do to keep safe. They are proud of the 'Healthy Schools Awards' the school has received and know the importance of regular exercise. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The choir's singing during the inspection was a moving example of the school's good provision for pupils' spiritual education. They have a good understanding of right and wrong and speak highly of their 'buddy' system, which offers support for youngest children. Pupils know the importance of contributing to the community, both inside and outside the school. For example, school council members are proud of their work in improving resources, making the school environment safer and interesting, and of their charitable fund raising.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The main reason for pupils' good progress is the quality of teaching in the school. Founded on the school's ethos of mutual respect, lessons proceed smoothly, with pupils working harmoniously together, even when not directly supervised. They share

resources sensibly and discuss how to solve problems, as was seen in an ICT lesson when pupils collaborated in pairs to simulate controlling traffic lights and robots. Teachers know their classes well and use short-term assessment effectively to adjust planning based on pupils' previous learning. The school has identified that tasks were not always varied to meet the needs of individuals in the infants, but action taken has addressed this. Planning shows clearly how the needs of different groups will be met and this was seen working well in the lessons observed. Work is marked thoroughly, with useful comments and short-term targets set and reviewed. Questioning to the class is effective and helps to underpin understanding. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution by quietly paraphrasing the teacher's words, and encouraging diffident pupils by acting as an audience for their thoughts. Occasionally, pupils are not prepared well enough for the ensuing tasks and in this situation they become unsure how to complete the tasks and make progress.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum meets statutory requirements, with particular strengths in promoting literacy, numeracy and social development. The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils well. It ensures that pupils working at different rates are stimulated fully, with the right challenges to interest and extend their understanding and skills. In the Foundation Stage, the curriculum has been reorganised and meets the needs of children well, and this is reflected in the good progress they make. Plans are well advanced to further improve provision here through the construction of a new outdoor classroom. Pupils with learning difficulties benefit from well-organised provision underpinned by clear targets which help them to achieve in line with their peers.

Those at risk of underperforming are identified, and gain from additional classes and sessions to help them succeed. Pupils also enjoy innovatory provision arranged through partnership with a local specialist secondary school where they may opt to study additional German or Mandarin Chinese. The school curriculum is enriched by a wide range of sporting and health-related activities as well as good provision for music through an orchestra, choir and instrumental tuition, with high pupil take-up rates.

Pupils are prepared well for future life in a good programme of personal, social and health education. Wider cultural knowledge is gained through a variety of activities. For example, a group learned about Chinese New Year with food and a special lesson.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Staff know pupils well in the school's highly supportive ethos based on the teachings of the church. Each pupil is valued as an individual, in line with the school's mission statement. In this atmosphere of mutual respect, guidance for pupils' personal development is good, resulting in pupils who are a delight to be with. Risk assessments, safeguarding procedures and child protection systems are thorough and known to staff. Other health and safety procedures are meticulously observed. Arrangements to support pupils' academic progress are good. The thorough assessment systems

allow close tracking of pupils' progress and have a positive impact on learning by identifying pupils who are at risk of underachievement and targeting them for focused support. Pupils have targets that state what skills and knowledge all must be able to demonstrate, and what they should or could do in addition. Most staff refer to these targets when teaching, but this is not fully consistent. Pupils with learning difficulties are supported well in lessons and through well-written individual plans, and there are good links with outside agencies. Parents are very appreciative of the work of the school. One parent commented, 'Staff are always welcoming to parents.'

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Good leadership stemming from the headteacher and shared across the school is the motive force behind the school's tangibly positive atmosphere and caring ethos. The school's mission statement makes it clear that this is a church school, emphasising its core values rooted in the gospels. These are realised in the school's day-to-day workings in all classrooms and around the school. This does not come about by accident and is a significant factor in pupils' good achievement and personal development.

The school takes effective action to address issues noted, for example, carrying out thorough checks on planning and outcomes in mathematics. It includes discussing pupils' experiences with them and taking action to improve the identified areas for development. However, the routine system for self-evaluation and forward, strategic planning based on its outcomes lacks rigour. Part of this follows from the absence of the headteacher and a deputy for much of last term, but the school agrees more can be done to bring a clearer focus on prioritising action and following it through rigorously. The current school improvement plan does not make clear how priorities were decided upon nor how success might be measured. The governing body is a supportive group with the best interests of the school at heart. Many members visit, both informally and formally, on a regular basis and it knows the school's strengths well. However, the body as a whole relies too much on the staff of the school for information and is not involved enough in the process of planning for school improvement.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you so much for being so polite and helpful when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking to you and seeing you work. You and your parents told us that you think this is a good school and we agree. Here are some of the things we think are best about the school:

- You! We think you behave superbly and work really well together, even when the teacher is working somewhere else.
- You all make good progress and do well in lessons because your teachers are careful to make sure the work you do is hard, but not too hard!
- The 'must, should, could' targets are helping you and your teachers to know how to do the best you can.
- All of the adults really care about you and try to make sure that the school's mission statement, that we saw on the walls, is really about what happens in your school.

There's just one thing that we think the school should do to get even better:

- Your headteacher and other senior teachers need to check how well the school is doing and decide how to make it better. We think they could do this even better so that everyone, including all of you, knows just what it is that the school is trying to improve and can work to make sure it does.

I am sure you'll all carry on working as hard as we saw and try to do as well as you can!