



St Cleopas Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 104613
Local Authority Liverpool
Inspection number 286989
Inspection dates 1–2 February 2007
Reporting inspector Mike McLachlan

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Beresford Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Liverpool
Age range of pupils	3–11		Merseyside L8 4RP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0151 7271725
Number on roll (school)	230	Fax number	0151 7261817
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Lynn Dobson
		Headteacher	Miss Jacquie Fleetwood
Date of previous school inspection	30 April 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Cleopas is situated in an area of very high social and economic deprivation. The number of pupils in receipt of free school meals is above the national average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average although none have statements of special educational needs. The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is low and very few have English as an additional language. The school has achieved a wide range of awards including Investors in People, Investors in People Leadership Award, The Basic Skill Quality Mark (for the second time), the Liverpool Healthy Schools award and a Leading Aspect Award for information and communication technology (ICT).

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

St Cleopas provides an outstanding educational experience for all its pupils and gives excellent value for money. Pupils start at the school with very low basic skills particularly in reading, writing and simple arithmetic. Pupils' social skills and cultural experiences are very limited so the school has much to do to prepare its children for learning.

Outstanding provision in the Nursery and Reception classes enables all children to start to catch up with their learning and develop the social skills needed to work, learn and play together happily and productively. Standards reached by the end of this stage are below average but this represents significant progress given the very low starting points. By the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 6 standards reached are in line with the national average. This represents outstanding achievement overall. High expectations of behaviour and the very many opportunities to contribute to the life of the school ensures pupils also reach outstanding standards in their personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The strength of this achievement is the direct result of inspired leadership and an exemplary team spirit shared by staff, pupils and parents. St Cleopas is stimulating, exciting and above all a happy place to work and learn. Leadership throughout the school is outstanding. The headteacher's expert and caring approach ensures that all pupils and staff feel valued. She sets very high expectations but provides the high level of support and the vast array of resources needed to ensure they can be reached. The quality of teaching is excellent. Consistently good and better lessons delivered in a stimulating and challenging way ensure pupils enjoy themselves and work very hard, often 'punching above their weight' solving difficult problems rather than just learning facts.

Staff work tirelessly to provide a rich curriculum which is supplemented by a very wide range of extra activities and supported by many visits and visitors. There is a very strong focus on widening horizons and raising aspirations, for example, the weekly 'Wednesday bus' ensures that groups of pupils are regularly taken out to experience a myriad of educational, cultural and sporting activities.

The school provides outstanding care, guidance and support for the pupils. All associated with school feel very proud of being part of the St Cleopas' extended family where the welfare and happiness of all is central to its mission. A remarkable feature of the school is the way pupils themselves care and support each other. For example, a number of pupils have been trained as peer mediators. These pupils work expertly with children who are upset, lonely or falling out to solve their problems and to settle minor disputes. The pupil-led school council is central to the work of the school and the weekly celebration assembly rewards pupils, adults and visitors alike for their contribution to school life. Consequently pupils become mature, healthy and active citizens very well prepared for future schooling and work.

The school accurately, though often too modestly, assesses its strengths and clearly knows what it needs to do to improve. Despite the many successes of the school there is no complacency. All staff, pupils, and the very able governing body, continuously

strive to improve. The capacity for the school's continued development is therefore outstanding.

What the school should do to improve further

- Implement the excellent strategies already identified in the school's development plan, particularly those aimed at improving pupil's literacy skills.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement is outstanding given that pupils reach national averages in the Year 6 tests having started from a very low base. Outstanding provision in the Foundation Stage helps children to quickly settle and gain confidence needed to achieve at school. Consequently while the standards reached are below national expectations overall progress is at least good and often outstanding for those with the lowest starting points. A very well planned and taught programme in Years 1 and 2 ensures pupils continue to make good progress although standards remain below the national average. Consistently good and better teaching throughout Years 3 to 6 ensures this good progress is maintained so that overall standards have caught up with the national average by the time pupils leave school. Standards are rising each year. Pupils currently in Year 6 are on course to reach the challenging targets set for them and achieve very well particularly as their standards on entry are lower than in previous years. Overall the achievement of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is outstanding. Likewise those whose first language is other than English is outstanding make very extremely good progress. These excellent achievements are due to the way the school expertly targets additional resources and makes best use of national initiatives to support these pupils in small groups or within lessons.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding and at the very heart of the success of this school. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is good. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and all show real enjoyment in their learning. They are attentive to their teachers, to each other and intensely proud of their school. They keep themselves safe, demonstrate very positive attitudes to maintaining healthy lifestyles, play together well and are very polite and friendly. Through their work on the school council, as learning buddies or peer mediators, pupils are developing a deep awareness of how their decision-making can have a positive impact on the school's provision. They are adopting skills that will serve them particularly well in later life. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They know right from wrong, demonstrate great pride in their successes and are developing a good understanding of the life-styles, cultures and beliefs of others.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

A significant strength of this school is the consistently high quality of teaching and learning in all classes. There is an exemplary team approach whereby teachers, assistants and the many other adults who support pupils' learning, work closely together to plan and deliver work accurately matched to the needs of the pupils. All staff have very high expectations, clearly enjoy working with the pupils and each other and the pupils respond magnificently to this. Teachers frequently pose challenging questions so that the pupils have to think very hard to work out answers. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils not only had to explain why a partly hidden shape could be a parallelogram but why it could not be a trapezium. Pupils of all ages work at a high level and most importantly are not afraid to have a go: this enables them to learn most effectively. They help and support each other's learning. For example, the excitement was obvious as Year 4 pupils listened to a story, analysed its style and then used this experience to write and deliver stories to older and younger pupils. The resulting work was of high quality and pupils were very proud of their achievements. Overall, teachers assess pupils' work very well giving very positive comments that helps pupils know and understand what they have learned and what they need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Curriculum provision is outstanding. The broad, balanced and exciting provision enables pupils to become self-confident and to work together harmoniously. The curriculum is vibrant and regularly and comprehensively reviewed. Significant emphasis is placed on developing literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. The school invests heavily in resources to support learning including an excellent new library, state of the art computer suite and a proposed extended outside learning area for the younger pupils. The curriculum is enriched by a remarkable range of additional activities including sport, music, French and out-of-school visits, plus excellent residential experiences for pupils in Years 2 and 5. The curriculum makes outstanding provision for pupils' health and fitness and to help them be aware of lifestyle choices through initiatives such as the high quality start of day fitness routine which was recently demonstrated to a headteachers' conference. This vast array of visits and visitors clearly raise the pupils' sights and aspirations and are the key to success in this school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care given to the pupils is outstanding. As one parent said, reflecting the views of many, 'we have complete confidence in the staff of this school - they could not do more'. The school works extraordinarily hard to ensure that all feel safe and happy

and to ensure pupils' self-esteem is enhanced through all it provides. Child protection procedures and risk assessments are very thorough. Pupils and parents know that there are adults in school who they feel comfortable talking to if the needs arise. Academic guidance and support are of the highest quality. Detailed individual records of pupils' academic progress are comprehensively shared ensuring achievements made by pupils are widely known and consistently celebrated. The 'pupil and adult of the week' assembly is a delightful example of the care shown for pupils and staff alike and of the enjoyment shown by all in their own and each other's achievements. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified at an early stage and their needs addressed sensitively so they are fully enabled to work alongside their peers.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The outstanding achievement and excellent quality of provision is due to the consistent and persistent drive by the headteacher to ensure all staff have the same desire to do the best for the children. Consequently, staff work willingly and tirelessly to provide a stimulating, exciting, challenging, but above all, enjoyable and rich experience for their pupils.

The headteacher with the expert support of her governing body, senior team and her subject leaders provides exemplary and authoritative leadership for the school. She has established a culture of continuous improvement and, for example through her innovative subject management teams, ensures that all staff are very well supported so they can take risks and strive to improve. Above all the school acts like an extended family where all feel valued and are able to influence the way the school is run. A significant feature is the contribution the pupils make to influencing and supporting the life of the school. Consequently, they feel proud of their own and each other's achievements. The school has the overwhelming support of its parents and community and has outstanding working practices with many external agencies and providers to support the work it does for pupils. The school has exemplary and robust systems for measuring its performance and knows its strengths well, although sometimes the judgements are too modest! It quickly identifies its weaknesses and strives to address them. The leadership at all levels show no signs of complacency and clearly have the capacity to bring about further improvements to this already exciting and innovative provision.

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Inspection judgements

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

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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 very much for the way you looked after us during our two days with you. We both think you did yourselves, your teachers and your parents proud.

You will not be surprised to hear that we think you go to an outstanding school. St Cleopas feels like one big happy family where everyone enjoys learning and working very hard. We think you make really good progress throughout your school and that you know lots of things because of the many different and exciting experiences you enjoy inside and outside the classroom. We think you have great teachers who make you work very hard but also make the learning fun and enjoyable.

What impressed us most is how good you are at supporting each other. There are so many examples, but in particular, we think your school council is brilliant and clearly very influential in the school. We could see the many improvements it has made. We also think your peer mediators do an important and terrific job and are very mature and grown up.

We particularly like your pupil and adult of the week celebration assembly. It is great to see the way you are all so pleased at the successes of each other. We were proud to get your 'visitor of the week' certificate. (We are not sure your teachers thought we were the best visitors that week!)

We think your headteacher and her leadership teams are outstanding. Miss Fleetwood sets such a high standard for everyone in the school. She also works very hard to ensure you and the staff have all you need to help you to succeed. We think she has very good plans to help you and the school improve. This means you can all work together to make your school even better.

It is not difficult to understand why one of you wrote on his final report last year,

'This year would have been even better - if I did not have to leave.'