

Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105071
Local Authority	Wirral
Inspection number	287113
Inspection dates	11–12 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Kevin Johnson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	268
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr T Anderson
Headteacher	Mrs K Robertson
Date of previous school inspection	24 June 2002
School address	Atherton Street Wallasey Merseyside CH45 9LT
Telephone number	0151 6392991
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is located in New Brighton, a small coastal town south of the Mersey. Pupils come from mostly White British backgrounds but there is an increasing number of White European pupils for whom English is an additional language. The number of pupils known to eligible for free school meals is broadly average. Less than average have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school was being led by the deputy headteacher during the term in which the inspection took place.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school where pupils are well cared for. Outstanding personal development contributes significantly to pupils' good progress and achievement. Pupils make the school's Catholic mission part of their daily lives. Not only in the way they fulfil their 'class promises' and care for one another in school but also in their tireless action to improve education facilities for children in some African countries. Relationships within the school are excellent and behaviour is exemplary. Attendance is good because pupils enjoy school and feel safe. They are confident that adults will always listen to their concerns whether social, emotional or academic. Bullying, they feel, is not an issue. Older pupils are outstanding role models for younger 'buddies' in the way they carry out their responsibilities. All pupils develop mature attitudes to diet and exercise. By the time they leave the school they are self-assured young people, confident about moving on to the next stages of their education.

Throughout the school pupils make good progress and achieve well. Children have average knowledge and skills for their age when they start in Reception. Good teaching in a well planned, challenging setting gets progress off to a good start so that almost all meet and some exceed their targets in most areas of learning. Nevertheless, the full scope of children's progress is limited by the lack of suitable space for outdoor learning. Good progress continues in Key Stages 1 and 2 because teaching is good. Ability grouping for some subjects in Years 3 to 6 is having a positive impact on learning. Standards and achievement have improved over the past year. The dip to broadly average standards in year 6 in the 2006 national tests has been reversed, most notably in science, due to rigorous monitoring and effective action. School data strongly indicate a return to above average standards with significant numbers of pupils attaining the higher levels in English, mathematics and science. Teaching and learning are good overall. Lessons are lively and enjoyable because teachers have a good rapport with pupils which engages them well in learning. There is always a positive climate where pupils are encouraged to 'have a go' and misunderstandings are dealt with without any loss of self-esteem. Assessment provides teachers with good understanding of pupils' abilities but this is not shared effectively throughout the school to give pupils better knowledge of their own learning in order to improve on what they do. There is some inconsistency in marking quality. The curriculum is good. It is greatly enriched by links with the local Roman Catholic high school which provides additional opportunities for design and technology, science, sports and performing arts. Events such as 'Big Art Week', watching the Rainbow Fish performed in German by a Year 3/4 class or welcoming an African poet bring fun into pupils' learning.

The school is led and managed well. The deputy headteacher has adapted well to the more senior role and is effectively ensuring continued improvement. She has gained the confidence of staff, governors and parents and has established a cohesive team which is focused well on raising standards. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching by senior staff is accurate but the roles of middle managers in this process are currently being developed. Senior leaders are very supportive of the deputy headteacher. They are consistently effective practitioners and good role models. Overall, leaders have been too modest in their evaluation of the school's work. Under the current leadership there is good capacity for further improvement. Governors manage finances carefully to ensure good value for money and satisfactorily support the school overall.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve outdoor provision for children in the Foundation Stage.

- Use assessment and marking more effectively throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 to give pupils better knowledge of their own learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress and achieve well from entering Reception class to leaving Year 6. They start in Reception class with broadly average standards for their age and, because of good teaching, build well on their early knowledge and skills. Good progress continues in Key Stages 1 and 2, as a result of effective monitoring by teachers, and pupils achieve well.

Standards at Key Stage 1 have been consistently above average for the past four years. They rose to well above average in 2005, when there was a very able cohort, but in 2006, settled back to above average levels in all subjects. Overall standards were average at Key Stage 2 in 2006 but pupils' performance in science was not as good as in English and Mathematics. Although standards over time have fluctuated, school data show an improved performance in the 2007 national tests at both key stages and that currently standards are above expectations at the end of Years 2 and Year 6. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make similar progress to others, due to the good quality support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Links with schools in Sudan and Rwanda, the celebration of 'one world week' and their learning about other faith cultures have done much to raise cultural awareness. Pupils have deservedly achieved Fair Trade status for their school. Attendance is good because pupils enjoy school enormously. They are always mindful of one another and have very trusting relationships with adults who work in the school. Pupils see the importance of keeping to a sensible diet and are extremely proud of their sporting achievements. As prefects they take responsibility for the well-being of others, for example, by reminding them about washing hands when it is appropriate. Pupils also act as role models and 'buddies', helping younger ones to practise their reading. Together they have helped to raise exceptional sums of money in aid of children less fortunate than themselves. The solid grounding which pupils gain in basic skills, combined with their outstanding ability to work harmoniously with others provides them with an excellent start towards securing their future well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and accounts for pupils' good progress. Some teaching is outstanding. Teachers plan lessons well, building on what pupils already know. They share objectives with pupils so they know what is expected of them. Good subject knowledge enables teachers to set high expectations and question pupils well in order to test their understanding. For example, reading skills were challenged exceptionally well when a group of Year 5 pupils learned how 'blurb' is used to summarise a story. In most lessons there is good pace to learning because teachers challenge and motivate pupils well. Resources, especially interactive whiteboards, are used well to bring lessons to life. Pupils' good learning is underpinned by the very good relationships established in lessons. Pupils feel secure and

confident that their contributions to lessons are valued by teachers and classmates. Teaching assistants are a valued part of the teaching team. They provide skilful support in classes and to individual pupils who need more focused help with basic skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum helps pupils to achieve well. In the Foundation Stage children are challenged by an exciting range of activities which develop their independent learning skills well. Nevertheless, outdoor provision is limited because of the lack of suitable space to support continuous physical development linked to other areas of learning. In Key Stages 1 and 2, basic literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills are taught well but opportunities for pupils to practise those skills across the full curriculum are not planned systematically. There is good provision for personal, health, social education and citizenship which helps pupils to make informed choices about their own relationships and personal well-being. A good range of after-school clubs, visits and visitors adds vitality to the curriculum and increases pupils' enjoyment of learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school takes good care of its pupils. Parents agree overwhelmingly that their children are in safe hands and many comment in glowing terms on the way staff look after them. Support for the most vulnerable pupils is good. Staff members know pupils well and respond sensitively to their particular needs. All pupils benefit from the positive 'can do' ethos which promotes self discipline and independence. Those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and others whose first language is not English are given the help they need to achieve well. Systems for safeguarding pupils in school are in place and governors ensure that risk assessments are robust. There are good systems for tracking pupils' academic progress through the school. Assessment is used well in the Foundation Stage and Year 1 to involve children in setting their own targets and give them an understanding of their own learning. This practice is not as well established in other classes, however, and is inconsistent overall. There is also some inconsistency in marking quality. Consequently, some pupils are not given enough guidance on the next steps towards improving their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management means that the school is continuing to progress well in raising standards and providing good quality care. Well established systems have enabled the deputy headteacher to step confidently into her current role and lead the school effectively. She has effectively overseen an upturn in standards and maintained the stability of daily routines in the midst of extensive building work.

Senior managers and subject leaders are an effective and supportive team. They share the school's vision for improvement and have a good overview of what is needed in their areas. There is scope for further extending the roles of middle managers, such as subject leaders, in order to support the work of senior staff. Governors are very loyal and committed to the school but are not yet fully effective in their role as critical partners in school developments.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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

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?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	2
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

Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School, Wallasey. CH45 9LT

Thank you for being so kind and welcoming when we visited your school recently. It was a pleasure to talk to you and find out about your school because you are all so polite and well mannered.

We were pleased to notice that your attendance has improved. That is important so keep it up! We also saw how well behaved you are, how you pay attention in lessons and how that helps you to make good progress. We were all very impressed by the way you try to help children in other parts of the world. Thank you for inviting us to your school play. Unfortunately none of us could attend but we did enjoy your lovely prayerful assembly and the wonderful singing. That taught us a lot about your achievements over the year.

We found out that you have a good school and all of the adults work hard to do their best for you. Everyone, of course, would like you to make even better progress so we have discussed, with your teachers, some things which we think will help. The first thing is to help Reception children learn even better by providing a nicer outdoor area for them. Also, we have asked teachers to make sure you always understand how well you are progressing and know what you need to do next to improve your work.