

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106761
Local Authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	287601
Inspection date	26 April 2007
Reporting inspector	John Rutherford HMI

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	206
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs C Browning
Headteacher	Mr M D'Rozario
Date of previous school inspection	15 October 2001
School address	Sandringham Road Intake Doncaster South Yorkshire DN2 5JG
Telephone number	01302 349743
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

This school is smaller than most and serves an area of broadly average social and economic circumstances. A very small proportion of the pupils is from a minority ethnic background or speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need is above the national average. The school has gained the following awards: Inclusion Charter Mark, BT Citizenship Award and Eco-School Award (bronze).

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 with outstanding features. The good areas of work relate to pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science, where they attain above average standards. Outstanding features include the pupils' personal development and well-being. Pupils begin school with broadly average skills for their age. The quality of provision and progress made by children in the Foundation Stage are good. Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1 and reach standards which are above the national average overall. In 2005, standards were significantly above the national average at the end of Key Stage 2 and had been for some years. In 2006 results dipped to average, which represented poor progress for this group of pupils but this was because of an unusual set of difficulties affecting this particular group. These difficulties have been resolved and pupils in the school currently are making good progress: they are on track to achieve ambitious targets. Pupils' performance in English and science is stronger than it is in mathematics. The school is responding robustly to this by improving the teaching of calculation and this is beginning to make a positive difference to pupils' progress.

Pupils make good progress because of strengths in the quality of teaching and learning. Lessons are lively, enjoyable and well-planned, involving pupils of all abilities in interesting activities. As a result, pupils are very enthusiastic learners. A particular strength is the development of good speaking skills which helps pupils to enhance their learning through questioning and discussion. In most classes, teaching assistants provide very good support to help lower attaining pupils gain the maximum benefit from lessons. Teachers are making good progress in introducing new methods for using assessment information to help pupils to make better progress. A school improvement priority is to refine these methods further and ensure they are used equally effectively in all classes. The inspection evidence supports this.

The organisation of the curriculum makes a very strong contribution to pupils' progress. Their literacy and numeracy skills are extended by using them in many different subjects. A well-planned range of interesting first-hand experiences inspires high quality discussion and writing. There is a very clear plan for the provision of different types of support for pupils who are falling behind or who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, based on a thorough analysis of their needs. A particular strength is the support given to remove social and emotional barriers to learning, often involving specialist external services and work with the pupils' families.

The personal development and well-being of all pupils are outstanding because of the very high quality of provision in the curriculum and the arrangements for care, guidance and support. Pupils' attendance is above average and they have very good attitudes to school work. Their behaviour is outstanding and they understand clearly the damaging effects of bullying and racism. They contribute to the life of the community through church activities and show much care and respect for others. Child protection arrangements are secure. Pupils have a good knowledge of healthy living and they feel safe in school. Their good skills in literacy, numeracy, talking and teamwork provide a solid foundation for their future development.

The headteacher provides very strong leadership in ensuring that pupils of all abilities and backgrounds can make the best possible progress in their academic and personal development. In doing this he emphasises partnership with parents and takes advantage of the support and curriculum enrichment that many external agencies offer. Governors make a very effective contribution to school leadership by asking searching questions about new approaches, then closely checking whether these are enhancing the pupils' education. The school has made good

progress since the previous inspection in improving the effectiveness of teachers with leadership responsibilities. They give effective support to colleagues in assessing pupils' work accurately and in identifying which areas of work need extra attention to help pupils make better progress. The school has also improved the quality of resources since the previous inspection. It provides good value for money and has the full support of the vast majority of parents.

What the school should do to improve further

The inspection confirms the school priorities to:

- Improve pupils' progress in mathematics so that standards are as high as those in English and science.
- Refine the recently introduced methods for using assessment information and ensure they are used effectively in all classes.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good and they attain above average standards. The performance of Year 6 pupils in 2006 was an exception to this, but the work and records of pupils currently in the school show that achievement and standards are now much better. Pupils achieve high standards in speaking and listening, which contribute to good achievement in mathematics, science and philosophy for children because they extend their learning through discussion and questioning. Writing is a particular strength and standards are well above average. Pupils are motivated to write well because their teachers give them very interesting and thought-provoking subjects to write about. Progress in mathematical calculations has not been as good as other subjects, but it is now a strong focus for teachers and this is already having a positive impact.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because support is planned very carefully to meet their individual needs and most teachers are very skilled at including them successfully in the same activities as other pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding. They enjoy coming to school and they learn enthusiastically in lessons. They work very effectively in group activities, listening carefully to other points of view and respecting them. From a very young age they reflect on the impact of urban development on the environment and express interesting opinions about this. They are developing a good understanding of the diversity of cultures and abilities in society. They understand the need for rules within any group of people and they contribute to making them. Many pupils are willing and able to take on significant responsibilities, for example 'buddying' other pupils at playtimes, teaching younger pupils about road safety and helping to interview adults who will work in the school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good because lessons are well planned. In most planning, the activities are carefully adapted to provide the right level of challenge for each ability group. In some very good class discussions teachers maintain everyone's concentration by asking specific pupils to answer questions and modifying the difficulty level according to their ability. The development of speaking skills is a particular strength and pupils make very good progress when they are given the responsibility for leading parts of a discussion. As a result of these good teaching methods, pupils are developing the good learning skills of working independently, clarifying their thinking through talk and working collaboratively.

Good marking helps pupils to improve their work further and this is especially effective when the marking is shared with parents to engage their support. This good practice is not yet used to equal effect in all classes. Teachers can accurately assess pupils' attainment and how it compares to expectations for the age group, but recently introduced methods for recording this do not yet clearly provide the information needed for future planning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum makes excellent provision for pupils' academic and personal development. Speaking and writing skills are improved by using them in history and philosophy. Pupils use computers effectively to plan and carry out science investigations. Work out of school is carefully planned to give pupils interesting first-hand experience of the topics they learn about in lessons. Additional programmes of support are very carefully planned to meet the individual needs of pupils who are lower attaining or who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. They are provided in a way that does not detract from the pupils' access to the activities of the rest of their class.

The curriculum includes a very good range of programmes to increase pupils' understanding of how they can contribute to society and achieve economic well-being, for example the Eco-School project, Philosophy for Children focusing on global citizenship, and a Technology Challenge organised by local businesses. A good range of extra-curricular activities includes sports, drama, music, modern foreign languages and additional study.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. A particular strength is the recording of pupils' social and emotional development. The records are used to very good effect in planning programmes of support for pupils who need it, often involving external support agencies. Good support is also provided for pupils' families where appropriate. The very good support for pupils includes programmes for those going through a period of emotional upset and for those not benefiting from school because of low self-esteem. In addition to such programmes there is a general ethos of pastoral care for all and pupils are confident about talking to adults when they feel upset or at risk.

As a result of recent measures to improve the use of assessment, many pupils are already aware of their targets and they can talk knowledgeably about them. They are involved in assessing and recording their own progress, therefore they know what they have achieved and can see clearly what they need to learn next.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher and governors communicate a very strong vision for excellent personal development and well-being in a school that includes pupils of all abilities and backgrounds. This vision is the driver for some outstanding work with pupils, which has resulted in the award of the Charter Mark for Inclusion. School leaders also have high expectations for what pupils will achieve in their academic subjects. Through good self-evaluation, they accurately identify the priorities for improving achievement further. Plans to tackle these priorities are effective in bringing about the necessary changes to teaching methods. Teachers with leadership responsibilities make a good contribution to this process by working in pairs to identify where improvement is needed and by supporting colleagues in refining their teaching and assessment.

The governing body works very well with school leaders to keep performance under review and they asked appropriate questions following last year's dip in the Year 6 national test results. They have been closely involved in setting ambitious targets for future attainment and they have systematic arrangements for monitoring the impact of strategies for meeting them. This supportive partnership makes a significant contribution to the school's good capacity for further improvement.

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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?	1
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	2

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?	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.

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	1
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	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

Inspection of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Primary School,
Doncaster, DN2 5JG

Thank you for being so helpful to my colleague, Mrs Bennett, and I when we came to inspect your school. You were very polite to us and you gave us some very helpful information about the many exciting activities you take part in. This letter tells you about how we judge your school.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel is a good school and in some ways it is outstanding. You helped us to make this judgement with your excellent behaviour, the way you help each other and your knowledge of how to look after the environment. You make good progress in your work because your teachers plan very interesting activities for you, and you take part in them enthusiastically. We were very impressed by how good your writing is. You have made a very good start with your targets in your self-assessment books. It is really important that you know your targets and what you have to do to achieve them, so please keep up the good work with your self-assessment. We saw that your headteacher and staff provide a very caring school for you, which helps to keep you safe, happy and healthy. Your governors also work very hard to make sure that the school provides the very best for you.

The governors, headteacher and staff are very keen that your school keeps improving. They want you to make even better progress in mathematics and they are also improving their records of your achievements. Our judgement is that these are exactly the right things to be working on. You can help by trying very hard with your calculations in mathematics lessons.

Mrs Bennett and I wish you all the very best for the future,