



Holy Family Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 108026
Local Authority Leeds
Inspection number 288002
Inspection dates 9–10 January 2007
Reporting inspector Ronald Cohen

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Parliament Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Armley, Leeds
Age range of pupils	3–11		West Yorkshire LS12 2LH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0113 2143565
Number on roll (school)	205	Fax number	0113 2798051
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Dean Davidson
		Headteacher	Mrs Pauline O'Connor
Date of previous school inspection	26 November 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–11	9–10 January 2007	288002

© Crown copyright 2007

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 two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Holy Family Catholic Primary School is a slightly smaller than average school in a very disadvantaged area of inner city Leeds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is nearly double the national average. There are average proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups but only a small number of pupils for whom English is not their first language. There is a large cohort of traveller pupils. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. However, the number of pupils with a statement of special educational need is above average. Attainment at entry is well below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Holy Family Catholic Primary School is a good school with some outstanding features. Central to this is the sense of teamwork and high expectations which the headteacher has instilled in her extended management team and staff, and their commitment to raising standards. An excellent tracking system is in place, which the school is using effectively to measure the progress of pupils, and to set challenging targets for their future academic work. It has not yet had sufficient time to impact fully on standards. The governing body supports the school well in its drive to raise standards.

Most children begin school with skills well below those expected in many areas of development but particularly in spoken English and social and emotional skills. They make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes due to a well planned and well delivered early years curriculum. Despite this progress, children's low starting point means that their attainment is still below average when they enter Year 1, because their literacy skills remain weak. By the end of Year 2, most pupils achieve national standards in reading and mathematics, though standards in mathematics dipped for the first time in 2006. Pupils' writing, though improving, is still a key area for development. Not all pupils have a wide enough range of language to draw on.

The good, purposeful and challenging provision which the pupils receive in the Foundation Stage, and in Years 1 and 2, forms a strong basis from which pupils make good progress as they move through the upper part of the school. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards which are higher than average and they leave school with skills and knowledge which prepare them well for the next stage of their education. Pupils' good progress and achievement is underpinned by the consistently good teaching throughout the school. Teachers put pupils' independent learning at the heart of activities, and they ensure that these activities excite and stimulate the pupils. Pupils mostly know what they need to do in order to improve, but marking is not consistently helpful.

The personal development and well-being of pupils is good. Pupils behave well and clearly enjoy their lessons. Pupils receive good quality care from dedicated and competent staff in a safe, inclusive and supportive environment. The overwhelming majority of parents have confidence in the school. As one parent put it, 'I could not wish for a better school. My children are totally happy.'

The school has tackled the issues from the last inspection effectively and provides good value for money. Its positive record of improvement shows that it has good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the standards of writing throughout the school, and extend pupils' vocabulary.
- Ensure that pupils' work is marked consistently well.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Despite their good progress, at the end of the Foundation Stage children's skills are still below the levels expected for their age. By the end of Year 2, pupils have made good progress and reach average standards in reading and mathematics, but standards remain below average in writing. In the upper part of the school, progress is good overall, and some pupils make very good progress. This is shown by the standards reached at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science, which are above average. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also make good progress, as do the small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language. The school has identified the need to improve pupils' writing, in order to raise standards in all subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

In the Foundation Stage, many children start with personal and social skills which are well below average, and find it hard to share and take turns. Good progress is seen, for example, in the Reception year, where children happily take turns to use the interactive whiteboard.

Attendance is satisfactory, overall, despite the school's best efforts to improve it. A minority of parents condone their child's absence. Pupils enjoy coming to school enormously and this can be seen in a wide variety of lessons. Throughout the school and in the playground, pupils behave well. Their attitudes to school are good and they are keen to learn. They are attentive to their teachers, use their listening skills particularly well and are proud of their school. They keep themselves safe, play together well and are polite and friendly. Their very strong commitment to healthy living is shown in the pupil-led dance and movement activities at lunchtimes.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils express their feelings well, particularly when working in small groups, as in an assembly led by Year 6 pupils. Many pupils show pride in their work and value each other. Pupils are developing a good awareness that all are equal whatever their background. The older pupils engage eagerly in all the duties associated with being playground 'buddies'. School councillors are offered many opportunities which prepare them well for adult life. They work eagerly at their tasks, discharge their responsibilities effectively and know that their decisions can have a positive impact on the school's future plans.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers plan well to ensure that the learning needs of all pupils are met. They have very good relationships with pupils and they have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. Classrooms are visually stimulating and help to create a positive atmosphere where learning is exciting. Pupils are challenged effectively and lessons move at a brisk pace. As a result, pupils are very keen to learn. They say that 'lessons are fun because they are hard work and make us think.' Teachers know that developing confidence and competence especially in spoken English and writing is a critical goal for the pupils, and appropriate emphasis is given to this.

Careful record keeping ensures that teachers monitor pupils' work thoroughly, effectively and consistently so that pupils' small steps of learning can be identified. Marking is good. It is best when teachers' comments tell pupils clearly what to do in order to improve their work. This is usually, but not uniformly, the case. The school makes good use of additional teaching and support staff, who work intensively, and effectively, with identified groups of pupils with particular needs. However, there are occasions when their skills could be used more effectively, for example, by supporting and encouraging pupils during whole-class activities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets statutory requirements and promotes pupils' personal development especially well. The range of additional activities includes sports and residential visits, such as those to an activity centre. Children are taught well about healthy food options and encouraged to consider lifestyle choices. Work in classrooms is supplemented well by physical education lessons, which place a high emphasis on dance. These promote enjoyment particularly well and enable the pupils to gain much confidence.

Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to learn to be cooperative and to work together harmoniously. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have access to the whole curriculum, which is suitably and purposefully modified to ensure their complete participation. The curriculum puts suitable emphasis on the key skills of numeracy and problem solving, but the emphasis on writing and widening pupils' vocabulary is not yet fully developed.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school sensitively places a high priority on ensuring pupils' care and welfare, and works very hard to ensure that all feel safe and happy. Child protection procedures

are comprehensive and pupils say they have adults in school they feel comfortable to talk to.

Academic guidance is outstanding. Very detailed individual records of pupils' academic progress are kept. This enables the school to identify readily those pupils whose achievement is progressing at speed and also those who would benefit from extra assistance. These excellent records are still being embedded but have potential to contribute towards raising pupils' standards.

Pupils are supported effectively as they move up through the school and throughout the school day. For example, the very wide range of rewards successfully encourages pupils to give of their best in all activities. Good work in school by the learning mentor is enhanced by strong links with support agencies, particularly for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This helps them to make the same good progress as other pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher leads her school well, with a clearly focused vision for the development of the school. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher and other senior managers, and they have created a real sense of teamwork and high expectations which runs throughout the school. This good leadership by the headteacher, and strong support, have brought about improvement and resulted in the school's good overall effectiveness. There are very good procedures in place for its day-to-day management, so the school runs smoothly in most respects. Some parents expressed concern about communications with the school. The school is aware of this and is improving procedures in this area. The evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses is accurate, enabling the leadership team to focus sharply on the school's key priorities. These are always linked to the best interests of the pupils. The governors are supportive of the drive to raise standards and are clear in their understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They act effectively as critical friends and are challenging in their expectations of what the school can achieve. The headteacher and governors are very intent on developing the school as a central hub to the faith and wider communities which it serves, adding to its capacity for improvement.

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

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------

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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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

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.

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	2
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

We want to thank you very much for the way you welcomed us to your school this week and for being so polite and helpful. This made our job much easier and meant that it was a real pleasure to spend time in the school. We particularly want to thank those of you who spoke to us, like the school council members. It was good that you shared with us how very happy you are at the school.

We think that you are very lucky to be at Holy Family School. It is a good school and in some ways it is outstanding. You help the school to be this good because you behave so well in and out of classes. This helps your teachers, so you can learn so many new things. We could see how much you enjoy school and we think that the teachers enjoy teaching you as well! Your headteacher and the other adults in school care for you and look after you very well. Staff are always looking for ways they can make the school better and to help you to learn more. They keep you safe and plan lots of interesting activities which many of you get involved in.

There are a few things that the school can do to get even better in the future. You can help by continuing to work hard to keep improving your standards in all your subjects, but particularly in your writing. We have asked your teachers to help you with these things. We have also asked them, when they are marking your work, to tell you very clearly what to do next time. Then you will know exactly how to improve your work even more. One other thing you can help with is this. A small group of you do not come to school as regularly as you should. This is a shame because you miss out on all the exciting learning and fun activities. So, please try extra hard to come to school as often as you can.

We think you have got off to a good start for this New Year. Enjoy your time at Holy Family and carry on working hard!