

St Ignatius Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108264
Local Authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	288057
Inspection date	19 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Lesley Clark

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	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	138
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms S Wilkinson
Headteacher	Mrs Imelda Lavery
Date of previous school inspection	17 June 2002
School address	Storrs Hill Road Ossett West Yorkshire WF5 0DQ
Telephone number	01924 302895
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This small school serves a widespread parish but because the church, parish hall and presbytery share the same site, it is part of a close-knit community. The area is broadly average in its social and economic circumstances. Although many children travel by bus or car to school, the school's travel plan encourages parents to park some way from the school so that pupils walk a short distance each day. The proportion of pupils identified by the school as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. There have been a number of staffing changes in the last year as well as temporary appointments to cover long-term absences.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: personal development, the quality of teaching and learning, and care, support and guidance. Particular emphasis was placed on how far pupils are involved in checking their own learning, how well assessment is used to determine what is taught, the quality of pupils' cultural development and whether the levels of care, support and guidance are as good as the school claims. Evidence was gathered from observations of lessons, discussions with pupils and looking at their work with them, discussions with the staff and the chair of governors, and a scrutiny of the school's documents and parents' questionnaires. Other aspects were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included, where appropriate, in this report.

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. The school accurately evaluates its work as good and justifiably highlights the outstanding care, support and guidance it gives to pupils. It is this aspect that parents really appreciate, observing correctly that the school gives, 'the right support to enable the children to make progress'. Pupils agree; they are very happy at school and, 'like it just the way it is'. Their above average attendance and good behaviour show their enjoyment.

Pupils achieve well. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are comfortably above average, especially in English and mathematics, and have been for the past five years. Standards of presentation are high and pupils take care with their work, demonstrating their good attitudes to learning. They are well taught. Teachers make sure that pupils have ample opportunities to use and apply their literacy, numeracy, and information and communications technology (ICT) skills in other subjects. They link subjects imaginatively together to make learning relevant. Pupils are encouraged to use lively vocabulary and to be self-critical. Their neat working habits enable them to set out mathematical calculations accurately and, because teachers make it clear to them what they need to do to improve their work, pupils make good progress. Those who need individual programmes of work to help them learn effectively are given good support and this contributes to the good progress made by pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Standards in science are more erratic and the school has justifiably identified this as an area for improvement. This is partly owing to some inconsistencies in teaching methods as well as interruptions in subject leadership. In several classes, most pupils, except for those who are identified as more able, have too few opportunities to learn through finding out for themselves. This results in some lower achievers and average learners marking time occasionally, especially if they find it hard to listen, absorb information and learn through answering questions. In classes where teachers cater fully for pupils' different ways of learning, lower achievers and more able pupils work with equal gusto and learn at a rapid rate.

Pupils' personal development, including their social and cultural development is good, with notable strengths in their spiritual and moral development. Frequent educational visits and twice-yearly 'other faiths' weeks give pupils a good understanding of different faiths and cultural diversity. The school's concern that pupils learn to do things to help others is evident in the way older pupils take care of younger ones and in making sure that everyone has friends. The school council is beginning to be involved in making decisions to benefit pupils, though this is at an early stage. Pupils think the 'suggestion box' for their ideas works well but the council minutes show the scope of pupils' involvement is fairly limited as yet. Pupils say that there is, 'no real bullying but some name calling' and that, 'you definitely get help if you need it'. This gives them confidence and security. They have a good awareness of why it is important to lead healthy lives, and explain why school meals are healthy because, 'we're not allowed too much ketchup and hotdogs are banned because there's too much fat in them.' Pupils benefit from good opportunities to take part in sport both during and after school. Their above average literacy, numeracy and ICT skills together with their well-developed sense of community prepare them well for their future lives.

The school's systems to safeguard pupils and to ensure they receive suitable guidance both academically and personally are outstanding. Child protection procedures are robust. Consequently, pupils feel safe at school and feel confident to ask for additional support from

the learning mentor who 'helps you if you can't concentrate'. The systems to check pupils' progress are equally strong and teachers use the information extensively to help them to plan what to teach. Senior managers keep a close eye on overall progress, identifying individuals who need more help. The effectiveness of these systems showed last year when pupils continued to make good progress despite several changes of teaching staff during the course of the year.

Good leadership, management and governance give the school firm direction in its drive for higher achievement. Innovative organisation and management of the curriculum, with staff leading groups of subjects which complement each other, ensures the centrality of religious education to pupils' personal, social and emotional development. Governors know the right questions to ask and provide suitable challenge and support for the school. The senior managers work effectively as a team, sharing the running of the school thus minimising the impact of long-term absences of key staff. However, subject leadership is not as fully developed as it was planned to be, especially in science and the humanities. The school's lesson observation notes show rigorous checking of teaching but give few pointers to help teachers develop pupils' learning. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and has a good capacity to improve further. It gives good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start in the Nursery because staff use accurate assessments of what children know and understand to direct children's choice of activities. Children make good progress, especially in personal, social and emotional development as they learn to play with each other and to share toys. Although resources for the outdoor curriculum are limited, children, nonetheless, have sufficient stimulating tasks to develop their skills in each area of learning. Reception children are taught in a class with younger Year 1 pupils but have similar access to a wide range of activities, which they choose themselves. Ready access to an outdoor curriculum is more difficult but lots of opportunities for physical development mean they do not miss out. Children make good progress, benefiting from lively, imaginative teaching which encourages their curiosity. By the end of the Reception year, most children meet or exceed the goals expected of them.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of pupils' learning by making sure that teachers match activities to suit pupils' needs.

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Annex A

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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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

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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you very much indeed for showing me your work and for talking to me so readily about your school. I was impressed by your neat handwriting and by the care you take to set out mathematical calculations clearly and methodically. You behave well and have good attitudes to learning. This shows in your good attendance and your great enjoyment of school.

You go to a good school and everyone in it takes excellent care of you, helping you to make good progress. You are well taught and clearly learn well and reach above average standards, especially in reading, writing and mathematics. Your headteacher and other staff in charge of leading and managing your school take good decisions to help you to learn effectively. The school council is doing a good job and I agree with you that there is even more that it could do, given all the suggestions you make in the 'suggestion box'.

It is part of my job to help schools to improve further. Although your headteacher and other staff have thought of most things, I have asked them to help you make even better progress by making sure that the work you are given is challenging enough for all of you.

I wish you the very best for the future and that you continue to enjoy your time at school.