



St Charles' Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 118048
Local Authority Kingston-upon-Hull
Inspection number 291006
Inspection date 1 February 2007
Reporting inspector Carole Cressey

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Norfolk Street
School category	Voluntary aided		Hull
Age range of pupils	3–11		HU2 9AA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01482 326610
Number on roll (school)	195	Fax number	01482 616446
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Canon Michael Loughlin
		Headteacher	Mrs Lynda Hoyle
Date of previous school inspection	1 December 2001		

Age group	Inspection date	Inspection number
3–11	1 February 2007	291006

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Most children come from White British backgrounds and about a third are from other backgrounds with English as an additional language. The vast majority of these pupils have been admitted in to the school during the last year. The school continues to admit three or four new children each week. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average and the percentage with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. At the time of the inspection the headteacher had been in post four weeks. The attainment of children when they start school is well below that expected typically for their age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St Charles' school is a good school which is very well led and managed. The school's success is due to its strong Christian ethos where the care, well-being, enjoyment and achievement of every pupil are central to its work. It is a most welcoming school, embracing children and their families from a wide range of different faiths and backgrounds. This is particularly apparent in the way the school is currently welcoming children from the European community. Despite recent uncertainties about the future of the school, the parents' confidence in the leadership and management of the school has never wavered. This is because they have seen that their children have continued to be happy and successful learners. The commitment to enabling all pupils to do their best has been maintained and standards have continued to improve although attendance remains well below average.

Children enter the school with standards that are well below the expectations for their age. They make consistently good progress and in 2006 pupils in Year 6 reached broadly average standards in English and mathematics although standards in science were below average. Good liaison between the school and parents has a positive impact on the achievement of pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties. The more able are also helped to reach their potential. Throughout the school, including the Foundation Stage, teaching and learning and the curriculum are good. Pupils say, 'learning is really good and we get a good education'. The curriculum is good and motivates pupils. The use of the Internet, visits, visitors, dance, drama and sport help to make learning fun. Teachers use their very good assessment systems to set targets for pupils' improvement. The marking of books, however, is not always helpful in pointing out to pupils how they can improve their work.

Pupils' personal and social development is very good and prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education. Pupils behave well, are eager to learn and form excellent relationships. As a result of good attention in the school to healthy eating and access to a good range of sports, pupils develop a good understanding of the choices need to be safe and healthy. The way they constantly turn off unnecessary lights shows how much they care for their environment. During recent months the school's priority has been to settle the newcomers from Europe happily into school. A lot of staff training is taking place but the impact is still not fully evident. Lesson plans do not yet clearly specify needs of pupils who are new to the school and learning English as an additional language.

The school accurately evaluates its own strengths and weaknesses and successfully works with a variety of organisations, including local schools, to meet the new challenges facing it. It has improved since its last inspection and has a very good capacity to improve further.

- Ensure that planning shows precisely how the needs of pupils with English as an additional language will be met in each lesson.
- Implement a consistent marking policy that helps pupils to improve their work.
- Work with pupils, parents and the community to improve attendance.

What the school should do to improve further

Ensure that planning shows precisely how the needs of pupils with English as an additional language will be met in each lesson.

Implement a consistent marking policy that helps pupils to improve their work.

Work with pupils, parents and the community to improve attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well during their time in school. After starting with well below average skills and knowledge, they make good progress so that by the end of Year 6, standards are broadly average in English, mathematics and science. In The Foundation Stage, an increasing number of children are starting Nursery with a limited knowledge and understanding of English. Good provision, however, means that most children learn quickly. About a quarter reach the learning goals expected of them by the end of the Reception Year.

In Key Stage 1, pupils continue to make good progress but still haven't caught up by the end of Year 2. In 2006 standards were below average overall although the pupils who had started school in the Nursery did well in reading and writing. Standards at the end of Year 6 have been improving steadily since 2004. In the 2006 national tests the ambitious targets for English and mathematics were achieved matching standards that were broadly in line with the national average. Standards in science, however, dipped from previous years and were below average. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are supported well and as a result most make good progress towards their targets.

Pupils for whom English is an additional language and who have been in the school for one or two years are making very good progress, reaching the expected standard and often exceed it.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are very good as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In keeping with the Christian ethos of the school pupils are always happy to help each other and to take on responsibilities. Older pupils regularly hear younger ones read at lunch times and take their role of being a buddy very seriously. Pupils are particularly welcoming of the new classmates from other countries. Like their parents they say it is good to experience another language and learn that there are different ways of doing things. Behaviour in lessons is exceptionally good and pupils are very eager to learn. However pupils say that behaviour in the playground is sometimes not as good as it could be. Pupils have a very good knowledge of how to be healthy and fit and speak proudly of the school council's meeting with the cook to discuss menus and have taken to heart the importance of a balanced diet

and the need to limit sweets and crisps. They particularly enjoy the many excellent sporting activities on offer, such as rugby, football, table tennis and the opportunities to train to be a sports coach. Pupils are aware of their responsibilities to the wider community and the importance of protecting the environment. The school council is busy planning events for Red Nose Day as well as collecting money for a local children's hospice. Despite the school's hard work to ensure pupils attend regularly, a significant number of children still have too much time off school. As a result attendance figures are much lower than the national average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good across the school. Lessons are well ordered with a strong work ethic and pupils respond well by working independently with effort and concentration. Literacy skills are given a very high priority and pupils have many well-planned opportunities to explain their ideas to the teacher and their learning partners. Staff use information and communication technology (ICT) very effectively to reinforce new learning and make lessons interesting and challenging. Parents are very pleased that higher attaining pupils are given extra challenging work both in school and for homework. Those who learn at a slower rate or have complex learning needs are well supported in lessons by teaching assistants. Individual targets ensure that learning is well matched to help pupils achieve their goals. Teachers regularly check how well pupils are doing through rigorous tests and observations. They know which pupils need additional support and encouragement and which need to move on to the next higher level. Pupils value teachers asking them what they know before they embark on some new learning and then help them to assess whether they have been successful. However, the marking of pupils' work in books is inconsistent and often doesn't point out how they can improve further. The use of bilingual staff helps pupils new to the school and new to English. However, lesson plans lack sufficient detail on how to adapt lessons to meet their needs.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum is underpinned by the school's Christian faith and is becoming very responsive to the needs of a changing and diverse community. In the Foundation Stage, teachers provide a range of exciting activities to challenge the children and inspire them to learn. The emphasis throughout the school on literacy, numeracy, and ICT is making a vital contribution to pupils' future role in society and their economic well-being. Dance and drama are used to great effect to promote and develop self-confidence in speaking, listening and forming valid opinions. Pupils learn how to stay safe and healthy and develop a caring attitude to God's creation. Visits are a vital part of learning and these take place at the beginning of a topic rather than at the end to help new pupils gain a better understanding about what they are going to be

learning. Links with the local football team's 'Learning Zone', local industries and business provide additional experiences for all pupils providing them with essential life skills. Knowing how to fill in a job application will present no problems to the Year 6 pupils in this school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well because of the very good care, guidance and support the school provides for its pupils. Effective procedures are in place for safeguarding children's welfare, health and safety. The school knows that to be successful learners, children need to start the day with a good breakfast inside them so a free breakfast club is available to all families. Parents speak very highly of how staff support their children who have complex learning needs or serious medical conditions. Staff identify pupils with learning or behaviour difficulties quickly and work well with a wide range of agencies to ensure that they get the extra help they need. The school has been particularly proactive in caring for the large number of new arrivals. English language classes and creative writing classes are on offer to parents so they can more confidently help their children at home. The school carefully tracks the progress of all pupils and the different groups and uses the information especially well to set challenging but realistic targets for the pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good with some outstanding features. Despite the threat of closure, changes in headteachers and the rapid rise in numbers, leadership and management of the school have ensured that standards have continued to improve. The newly appointed headteacher has quickly earned the respect of staff, parents and governors and is building well on the work of previous leaders. Working with senior staff she has identified how the school can improve standards further and enrich pupils' experiences and life chances. The evaluation of national and school based test results and of teaching and learning enables strengths and weaknesses to be quickly and accurately identified. The school recognises that planning and marking are areas to be addressed in order to ensure that pupils' progress is accelerated further. Now the school has secure future plans in place to improve outside play facilities for the Foundation Stage and to provide stimulating resources in the two playgrounds for older children. The leadership, including senior managers and governors, work tirelessly to ensure that the growing number of newly arrived pupils receive the additional support they need as quickly as possible. There is a tangible sense of excitement in the school as all concerned work together to improve the provision even further.

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
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	1
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	4
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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?	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	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	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

St Charles' Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School

Norfolk Street

Hull

HU2 9AA

02 February 2007

Dear Pupils

Thank you very much for being so friendly and welcoming when I visited your school a short while ago. I was so sorry not to be able to talk with Year 6 pupils but you were out on an exciting day at the secondary school. I do hope you enjoyed it and that it made you look forward to next September when you will be Year 7.

There were many things about your school that I liked. It was good to hear how much you enjoy learning and how you value all the help your teachers give you. You all work really hard and the results show in your books and your tests. When I looked at your English and mathematic books I thought that your teachers could write more helpful comments to show you how to improve your work even more.

Your behaviour in lessons and around school is very good, so well done. Some of you said that behaviour in the playground could be better if there were more interesting things for you to do. You will be very pleased to know that your teachers are already planning to provide you with a much better playground. Perhaps you will be able to help them with design and suggest games and activities to make playtime more exciting.

You seem to know the importance of eating sensible food and taking lots of exercise. Do keep that up because it is so important to staying healthy and happy. It is also important that you do not take too much time off school, and get behind with your work. I have asked the staff to help some of you improve your attendance because at St Charles' it is much lower than many other schools.

You all care a great deal for each other and enjoy being buddies and members of the school council. I was especially pleased to see how friendly and helpful you are to all the new children who are arriving at your school. You are quite right to be excited about learning to speak some Polish words and finding out about how children live in other countries. You are certainly taking your responsibility to care for the planet very seriously and you have reminded me that I should conserve the world's energy by turning off light bulbs when they are not needed.

I can see why you like going to such a good school where teachers make learning fun. I do hope you continue to enjoy school as much as you do now and that it will help you to become happy and successful adults.

Carole Cressey

Lead Inspector