

St Mary and St Andrew's Catholic Primary School, Barton Newsham

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119444
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	291422
Inspection date	24 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Dave Byrne

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	113
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr William Kelly
Headteacher	Mrs Susan E Riley
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2002
School address	Station Lane Barton Preston Lancashire PR3 5DY
Telephone number	01772 862335
Fax number	01772 862335

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small rural school. The vast majority of pupils are of White British backgrounds and a small minority are of Asian heritage, although none has English as an additional language. Most pupils live in advantaged circumstances. The attainment of most children starting school in Reception is above what is normally found for their age. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average as is the percentage with learning and/or behavioural difficulties. Out of school care is provided before and after school.

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 some outstanding features. Outstanding leadership by the headteacher ensures that the school is constantly seeking improvements whilst maintaining high standards and excellent levels of personal development amongst pupils. The school is held in very high regard by parents and is a valued part of the local community. One parent's view typifies those of the large majority by saying that the school is 'caring, nurturing and successfully develops the uniqueness of each child'. Many parents are very appreciative of their access to the good quality out-of-school care.

Pupils do well, in terms of their academic and personal development. Children get a flying start to school life from the excellent provision in the Foundation Stage. Good teaching and an exciting curriculum successfully build on the relatively advanced skills that pupils bring from home. In Years 1 to 6, pupils make good progress. At the end of both key stages, pupils gain high standards in English, particularly in reading, and in mathematics and science. Very effective contributions of specialist teachers and coaches result in pupils doing well in music, French, information and communication technology (ICT) and sport. Given the above average levels of attainment on entry to school of most pupils, their achievement is good overall. Pupils with learning difficulties do well as a result of very effective management and good support by teachers and teaching assistants. Able, gifted and talented pupils make good progress but the lack of a clear strategy for consistently challenging their advanced skills and knowledge sometimes restricts their progress.

Pupils love school and are well on their way to being good citizens. They have a very good understanding of how to live safe and healthy lives and are extremely well prepared for their next stage of education. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and contributes to pupils' outstanding behaviour and sensitivity to the needs of others. Their desire to learn is remarkable and during lessons they soak up new ideas and thrive on being challenged. The very good rate of attendance reflects pupils' love of learning. They enthuse about the excellent range of extra-curricular activities available to them. Although many pupils are aware of what they need to do to improve in English, in other subjects, such as mathematics and science, guidance about how to improve is not strong enough to involve pupils sufficiently in assessing their own work.

The school has a generally accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. The headteacher, supported by an effective deputy, willing staff and good governing body, has ensured that the school has improved since the last inspection. Better resources, remodelled buildings and exciting developments in the curriculum have moved the school forward. Given the current circumstances, the school has a good capacity for improvement in future.

What the school should do to improve further

- Devise, implement and monitor the impact of clear strategies for ensuring that able, gifted and talented pupils make even better progress.
- Increase the involvement of pupils in their own assessments in subjects other than English.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are very high and given the above average starting point to school, achievement is good. Children start Reception with levels of development that are above what is normally found for their age. Very good provision in the Foundation Stage results in rapid progress so that, by the start of Year 1, many children exceed expectations for their age. Particularly good progress occurs in their personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy. In Key Stage 1, the very good progress continues. Since 2004, standards in Year 2 have improved at a faster rate than has occurred nationally in reading and writing. In 2006, standards in reading were well above average whilst in writing and mathematics they were above average. In Key Stage 2, the overall rate of progress steadies in Years 3 and 4 but picks up rapidly in Years 5 and 6. Standards at the end of Year 6 have held up well over recent years and have been well above average overall. In 2006, however, they dipped slightly in English and mathematics, although they remained above average. Projections for 2007 indicate that pupils are on course to achieve their challenging targets. The good achievement of pupils overall, including those with learning and/or behavioural difficulties, masks the fact that able, gifted and talented pupils could make more progress if there was a clearer strategy for challenging them. Pupils also achieve well in ICT.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. In all classes, pupils thrive on learning and their love of school is seen not only in their smiling faces but also in their very high levels of attendance. Pupils care for others, and behave with courtesy and politeness at all times. Older pupils talk with pride about the way they serve school dinners and help younger ones at play. All pupils develop a good sense of citizenship through participating in the school council. This democratic body influences school life and is proud of the way the school grounds and play facilities are being improved as a result. Very good attitudes exist amongst pupils to eating healthily and taking exercise; all know the options open to them. Excellent relationships with others, a clear understanding of how to be a good citizen and a secure grasp of basic skills prepare pupils very well for their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good with some outstanding features. Across the school, teachers are very caring and form good relationships with pupils. Lessons are generally well planned and organised with high expectations of pupils to think for themselves and take responsibility for their learning. Teaching is particularly strong in the Foundation Stage and Years 5 and 6, because work is challenging and carefully planned to extend pupils' prior knowledge and skills. In all classes, the needs of most pupils are met, but the advanced skills and knowledge of able, gifted and talented pupils are not consistently challenged and extended. Teachers have good knowledge of most subjects and excellent input from specialist teachers of French, music, ICT and physical education enhances the learning for all pupils. Teaching assistants work closely with teachers, making sure that all pupils, particularly those with learning and/or behavioural difficulties, are

included in all aspects of school life. The marking of pupils' work varies in quality. In English it helps to guide pupils towards how to improve, but in other subjects marking is less constructive and doesn't consistently offer pupils enough guidance.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is very good with some outstanding features particularly with regard to the enrichment provided by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities. The Foundation Stage is adapted well to meet the advanced skills of most children. In Key Stages 1 and 2, the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are planned effectively and improved opportunities for ICT benefit learning. Strategies to develop sport, music and a modern foreign language successfully broaden the quality of pupils' education. A very good start has been made to link subjects together to release pupils' creativity. The excellently planned project focusing on islands very effectively brought out pupils' skills in music, dance and drama and resulted in some excellent performances and imaginative writing inspired by the pupils' experiences. Strategies for developing personal, social, health and citizenship development are well planned and effective. Pupils with learning and/or behavioural difficulties are very well provided for but the planned provision for able, gifted and talented pupils is less effective.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils' care, guidance and support are very good. Provision for pastoral care is outstanding and, whilst good, academic guidance could be better. Parents rightly talk of the school as being like a large family in which everyone looks after each other. This ethos pervades the school and the safety and well-being of pupils has a high priority. Good procedures exist for inducting new children to school and easing transition to secondary school. All procedures for child protection, health and safety and the safeguarding of pupils are effectively implemented and monitored. Pupils trust the adults around them and feel confident to share concerns if necessary. Assessment is used effectively by teachers to inform planning but the pupils' involvement in evaluating and assessing their own performance is not as advanced as it might be. Pupils know what they need to do to improve their English work. This is currently being extended to develop clear targets for raising standards in other subjects. The school works closely with parents in providing support at home for their children's learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The quality of leadership and management is good and ensures that the school gives very good value for money. It commands the respect of parents and ensures that the school is a valued part of the local community. Outstanding leadership by the headteacher, supported by an effective deputy and good governing body, ensures that the school maintains a clear focus on both the academic and personal development of pupils. Complacency does not exist. Staff willingly consider ways of improving the school. Effective professional development, including links with other schools nearby and further afield, keeps up the momentum for change. Subjects are well managed and monitored. The management of the Foundation Stage is excellent and the provision for pupils with learning and/or behavioural difficulties is very well organised. The governing body and senior managers get the best from its budget; they ensure that the buildings

are of a high quality and that pupils have access to outstanding environmental resources in the school grounds.

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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	1
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	1
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	1
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	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

May 24 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Mary and St Andrew's Catholic Primary School, Preston PR3 5DY

My day in your school was very enjoyable. Your view that your school is good is accurate. You read and write well, are good at mathematics and science and also do well in ICT. I am impressed by how well you do in sport, French and music. Your school is good for a number of reasons.

- Firstly, the way you are. I was impressed by how well you behave and how much you think of others. You try very hard in lessons and seem to really enjoy learning new things.
- Secondly, the quality of your teachers and staff and in particular your headteacher. They do their best to give you a great experience in school and give you a good start to life.
- Thirdly, the quality of your school buildings and in particular the outdoor resources. Your gardens and wildlife resources are excellent.
- Fourthly, the support and help that your parents give you and your school.

I was pleased to find that you are aware of how to live healthy and safe lives and I hope that you continue to take this seriously in future.

There are two things I have suggested to the school for making it even better. Some of you who are able, gifted and talented could do better at times, so I have asked the school to find ways of doing this. Also, it would help you if you were given more opportunities to get involved in your own assessment so that you are more aware of how to get even better.

Best wishes to you all,

Yours sincerely

Dave Byrne

Lead inspector