

Our Lady and St Hubert's Roman Catholic Primary School, Great Harwood

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119645
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	291490
Inspection dates	22–23 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Judith Straw

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	142
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Eileen Hayes
Headteacher	Mrs Kay Schofield
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2002
School address	Hallfield Road off Harwood Lane Great Harwood Blackburn Lancashire BB6 7SN
Telephone number	01254 885778
Fax number	01254 888728

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average school but with a steadily increasing roll. It is situated in an area of average social advantage. Fewer pupils than average claim a free school meal. Most pupils come from White British families and none are at an early stage of learning English. A considerable number of pupils join the school during Key Stage 2 and often in Years 5 or 6. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than average. The headteacher has been in post since September 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with many good features. Parents have confidence in the school and say that they always feel welcome. Teachers make learning fun by including a variety of activities. Praise and encouragement feature strongly and enhance confidence. Consequently, pupils enjoy school and attendance is above the national average. Staff know the pupils very well and parents are pleased with the good attention given to the safety and welfare of their children. Pupils say they feel safe because they know somebody is always at hand if they need help. The school has achieved Healthy School accreditation and pupils show a real understanding about how to keep themselves fit and well. This focus on fitness is also evident in the enrichment to the curriculum which provides a good range of sporting activities. The school is very much a community and pupils contribute to the family atmosphere in many ways. Their willingness to help others transfers to the local community and the school is very much at the heart of parish life. This strength in social skills, and the pupils' developing academic skills, prepares them satisfactorily for the next stage of their education and for the future.

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. From an average starting point, children make good progress and by the end of Reception children reach or exceed the early learning goals expected for their age. Outside areas are used creatively to enhance pupils' learning. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 where pupils consistently reach above average standards and achieve well. Teaching and learning are satisfactory elsewhere. Assessment is not sufficiently developed to help pupils understand how well they are doing and how to move on.

In Key Stage 1, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The pupils achieve well; their good achievement is reflected in the results of teachers' assessments at the end of Year 2. The school has a history of similarly good achievement in Key Stage 2 but, in 2006, its results in the tests at the end of Key Stage 2 fell and the school did not meet its agreed targets. While standards in English and mathematics were average, those in science were below average. Under the headteacher's leadership, the school has taken swift action to counteract this decline. The pupils' work shows that the actions taken are increasing their rate of progress and that standards are average.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in science.
- Establish a strong system for checking on pupils' overall progress, so that pupils know how well they are doing, how to improve and what their individual targets are.
- Develop the role of subject leaders to include monitoring and evaluation of the provision in their subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory overall. Standards in English and mathematics are average but those in science are below average. The achievement of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is satisfactory.

Children's attainment is typical for their ages when they start school in the Foundation Stage, although there has been a gradual decline over recent years in their personal, social and

emotional development and their knowledge and understanding of the world. They make good progress in all areas of learning and reach or exceed the learning goals for their age. Pupils make good progress throughout Key Stage 1 and the results of national tests and assessments have been above average for the last five years with pupils achieving well. Higher attaining pupils do especially well in gaining the higher Level 3 in reading but are not as successful in writing or mathematics.

After a number of years in which the school's results in tests at the end of Key Stage 2 have been consistently above average, they fell sharply in 2006. This was partly because nearly half of the pupils had learning difficulties and/or disabilities and several with below average attainment had joined the school late in Key Stage 2. Nevertheless, in science, the pupils underachieved. The school has put in place a number of measures to raise standards, such as a special focus on improving the teaching of science. The pupils' work shows that the current Year 6 pupils are making better progress in English, mathematics and science and that standards in these subjects are average.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Most pupils enjoy coming to school, their attendance is above average and they enjoy the numerous activities planned for them. Their behaviour is generally good and, as one parent pointed out, the pupils respect their teachers and each other. There is no bullying or harassment and children say they feel totally safe and well looked after in school. There are many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility by being prefects, monitors, playground friends or 'Hubert's Helpers.' The newly-formed school council has made a good start in shaping the direction of improvements in school and representing their fellow pupils. They have been involved in the successful bid to achieve Healthy School status, have helped to develop new 'golden rules' and advised on better arrangements to make lunch and break times more enjoyable. They feel consulted and important and know that their voice is heard.

Pupils work hard in raising money for charity and have some understanding of the lives of the many different groups of people across the world and within the United Kingdom. Through an effective personal, social and health education programme pupils are learning how to live healthy lifestyles. They are confident and articulate and this, combined with improving standards in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) means that they are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with examples of good lessons. Teachers use imaginative resources to get across their messages more forcefully and pupils say 'The teachers make learning interesting and fun.' Pupils enjoy the variety of methods used to promote their learning, for example, role play, 'talking partners' and extending their skills in ICT. Effective management enables pupils to learn in an orderly environment. Teachers prepare lessons well with a planned sequence of tasks to enable lessons to run smoothly. Pupils make satisfactory progress and this is accelerating. However, marking and assessment are not sufficiently focused to help pupils improve their work. Pupils do not know how well they are doing or how to

improve. The measures taken to improve teaching and learning, particularly in science, are improving the quality of learning and promoting greater enjoyment. The teaching of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good because they have detailed individual education plans and effective support from skilled teaching assistants.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Teachers plan well to ensure pupils cover all subjects of the National Curriculum. A wide range of activities is offered in the Foundation Stage and the newly enlarged rooms in Reception and Key Stage 1 have given scope for an exciting learning environment. Classrooms are organised effectively to enable children to learn through play and to work independently. The curriculum is enhanced with French lessons in Years 1, 2 and 6 and by specialist music teaching. The headteacher has instituted 'Excellent and Enjoyable' days where the whole school follows a different timetable on a particular theme. Last term, a day was given to looking at space exploration and travel. A strong focus is put on literacy and numeracy and opportunities to develop ICT skills are built into all subjects. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities which extend learning beyond the school day. Pupils enjoy making many visits and receiving visitors into school. Links with the local secondary school are used productively, particularly in sport and music. The curriculum enhances pupils' personal development because lessons allow discussion about relationships and safety issues which extend and develop pupils' interpersonal skills. The school has plans to make further improvement by developing more cross-curricular links.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school provides very good pastoral care of its pupils and ensures that they learn in a safe and happy environment. This is a friendly community where all the staff know the pupils well and there is mutual respect and trust. Procedures to safeguard pupils are good. All statutory child protection procedures are in place. Pupils are safe and healthy. The school works well with outside agencies and with parents so that pupils receive good support when needed. The support and guidance for pupils' personal development is effective. Pupils are given numerous opportunities to develop their interpersonal skills and to contribute to the life of the school and wider community.

Academic guidance, while satisfactory on a day-to-day basis, does not go far enough. Targets are too general and not specific to each pupil. Pupils' ability to judge for themselves how well they are doing is underdeveloped. Until recently the school did not have an accurate picture of the progress each pupil was making. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are monitored closely and provided with the support they need to participate fully in lessons and school life.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The leadership of the headteacher is taking the school forward with renewed vigour and determination to raise standards in Key Stage 2 and to build on the undoubted strengths of the school. She is ably supported by an experienced

deputy headteacher who also provides good leadership of the Foundation Stage. Staff have adapted well to the change in management and are fully behind the headteacher's initiatives. Parents appreciate the improved communication between school and home and their increased involvement. The ethos of the school is positive and underpinned by shared Christian values. The school benefits from good links with a range of other schools, agencies and groups within the local parish.

New procedures for monitoring and checking on the work of the school have been introduced but have yet to be embedded. Early signs are promising. Subject leaders have a good understanding of their subjects but at present they do not have opportunities to check teaching and learning in order to make improvements. Governors work tirelessly and are equally committed to raising standards and making the school the best it can be. They have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Finances are managed securely and efficiently. The school provides satisfactory value for money. Purposeful leadership, the shared commitment to raising standards, evidence from the improvements already made, and accurate self-evaluation show that the school has a good capacity to improve.

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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?	3
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?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

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	2
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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
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?	3

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?	3
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	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

Our Lady and St Hubert's Roman Catholic Primary School, Great Harwood

Hallfield Road

off Harwood Lane

Great Harwood

Blackburn

Lancashire

BB6 7SN

23 March 2007

Dear Pupils

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited you last week. I was pleased to talk to so many of you. I want to give special thanks to the members of the school council who gave up their time to talk to me and to tell me how the council has been set up and what you have achieved so far. I enjoyed looking at your smiling faces at the celebration assembly.

These are some of the things I liked about your school.

- You told me that you enjoy school most of the time and appreciate the many activities you do. You said that you are proud of your school.
- You said that the teachers make learning interesting and fun. The teachers work hard to plan interesting lessons for you.
- The school council is doing a good job in helping to make improvements in school.
- Many of you are generous with your time and efforts helping around school and raising money for different charities.
- You study a good range of interesting subjects with special lessons in French and music and extra clubs and activities after school.
- The school takes good care of you so that you are confident, safe and healthy.

To make your school even better I have asked the teachers to help you do better in science and to change the way they mark your work to give you a better understanding about how to improve. I have also asked them to keep a record of how well you are achieving in all subjects throughout your years in school. You can help by always doing your best and trying hard to reach the targets set for you.

Good luck to you all in the future.

Yours sincerely

Judith Straw

Inspector