



# St Wulstan's Roman Catholic School, Great Harwood

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 119646  
**Local Authority** Lancashire  
**Inspection number** 291491  
**Inspection dates** 11–12 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Keith Bardon

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Rushton Street
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Great Harwood, Lancashire
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		BB6 7JQ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01254 884533
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	141	<b>Fax number</b>	01254 877154
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Valerie Austin
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Marie-Christine Whalley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 November 2001		

<b>Age group</b> 4–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 11–12 January 2007	<b>Inspection number</b> 291491
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

The school serves a built up area with a high level of social and economic disadvantage. With very few exceptions, pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. Although most children have had some pre-school experience, their attainment on entry to Reception is often a little below that expected of the age group. Pupils can attend a breakfast club at the start of each day.

## 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 good features, particularly in the quality of the curriculum, the level of care pupils receive and the personal skills they develop. Across the school as a whole, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards are average. Pupils achieve well in Reception and Key Stage 1. By Year 2, standards are above average. This is the result of good teaching, a stable teaching staff and well planned developments. There have been many changes of staff in Key Stage 2 in the last few years. Pupils' achievement in this key stage is satisfactory, but periodically having to adjust to different teaching styles has reduced the pace of pupils' learning. By Year 6, standards are broadly average but, as the attainment of the younger pupils shows, they could be higher.

Provision in the Reception class is good and children are taught well. By the time they move into Year 1, children's attainment matches and in some cases exceeds national expectations for their age. Good teaching in Key Stage 1 builds successfully on this solid foundation. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and move their ideas and understanding forward at pace with well planned and stimulating activities. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory but more variable in quality than in the younger classes. While there are examples of good teaching, on occasions pupils are given insufficient opportunities to bounce ideas around and to engage in lively discussion.

The excellent relationships pupils enjoy with staff make them feel safe and secure. They describe the school as being 'full of nice people'. In this warm atmosphere, pupils develop into considerate young people with a strong sense of responsibility. Behaviour and attendance are good and pupils work hard during lessons. They are provided with a wide range of interesting opportunities to learn and they clearly enjoy their lessons. The comments teachers write when marking, and the targets they set, provide pupils with clear guidance on how to improve their work. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very well organised and, as a result, they often make good progress.

The headteacher's clear vision is promoted consistently by staff and reflected fully in the school's strong sense of community. Across the school as a whole, there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. In the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1, well managed initiatives have generated a good pace of development. Senior staff have a clear picture of what aspects of the school are working well and what could be better. There is a determination to bring about the same improvements in Key Stage 2 to match those achieved lower down the school. Senior members of staff collect extensive information about the school's performance which is used constructively to determine the priorities for improvement. Governors carry out their statutory responsibilities diligently, supporting the school's work and keeping a careful watch on the quality of education it is providing for pupils. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in Key Stage 2.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 to that enjoyed by younger pupils.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory and, by the end of Year 6, standards are average. Children make good progress in Reception and, as they move into Year 1, their attainment meets expectations for their age in all areas of learning. Up to and including 2005, Year 2 pupils attained broadly average standards in the national assessments. In response to the school's initiatives to raise standards in Key Stage 1, results improved substantially with a clear increase in the proportion of pupils attaining at an above average level. This improvement is being sustained. Year 2 pupils are achieving well and attaining standards that are above average. In 2006, results from the national tests in Year 6 were similar to those of previous years. They did not show the improvement made in Key Stage 1 and the school missed its targets. Now that staffing has stabilised, the school is focusing development on this age group. Achievement in Key Stage 2 is at present satisfactory and standards in Year 6 are as expected for this age group. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities respond well to the effective support they receive and often make good progress towards their individual targets.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils acquire a range of effective personal skills and develop into sensible, caring individuals. They develop a strong sense of community and willingly help their teachers, other pupils and those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils are happy at school and levels of attendance are high. They work hard in lessons and are well behaved. In discussion, pupils said they felt safe in school, although younger pupils identified a problem with a small minority of older pupils in the playground. Pupils value the opportunity to express their views through the suggestion box and feel proud when their ideas are taken up. Although younger pupils have only a tentative grasp of what is involved, older pupils develop a good understanding of how to stay fit and healthy. Many take regular physical exercise and make an effort to eat a sensible diet. Through various activities, such as acting as stall holders at the school's Christmas market, pupils are introduced to the world of commerce. They work productively alongside others and develop sound literacy, numeracy and ICT skills, all of which provide a solid platform for future learning and life after school.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are good in the Reception and Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. At the time of the inspection, two out of the three Key Stage 2 teachers were new to the classes they were teaching. Teachers set clear objectives so that pupils know what they are expected to learn and often refer back to them periodically to keep pupils focused. Many lessons, particularly those for younger pupils, involve a high level of pupil participation, thinking and decision making. On occasions, particularly in Key Stage 2, pupils are required simply to follow instructions and answer quite narrow questions. While pupils make steady progress in such lessons, opportunities to extend their learning through discussion and interaction are missed. In most lessons efficient use is made of time but, on occasions, teachers do not move on to the next stage quickly enough. Assessment is used well to match work to pupils' different levels of attainment. Well judged support enables pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to participate fully in lessons. Marking is good and provides pupils with clear information to help them improve their work.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and provides pupils with a wide range of interesting opportunities to learn. All the required subjects are taught and the curriculum is broadened and enriched with a range of additional features which include French. Pupils are encouraged to use their developing literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. Investigations feature prominently in the science curriculum but some of the enquiry skills are not promoted well enough. As a result, pupils' ability to evaluate the data they have collected and to draw informed conclusions from it is underdeveloped. Reception children benefit from carefully planned activities well suited to the age group. The curriculum for personal, social, health education and citizenship is well structured and makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. Well established links with the local high school and with community services provide further opportunities for learning and pupils participate in a range of enjoyable extra-curricular activities.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Pupils are cared for well and provided with a secure and pleasant environment in which to learn. They describe staff as kind and helpful and are confident that if they have a concern there is someone they can readily turn to for help and advice. Systems for safeguarding pupils are in place and a careful watch is kept on the welfare of all pupils. Relationships are excellent and pupils are provided with clear and effective personal guidance. Certificates for good behaviour and prizes for helping others are a source

of immense pride, particularly when received in front of parents or carers. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive well planned and effective support and guidance from the headteacher, class teachers and well trained learning assistants.

Procedures for tracking pupils' academic progress are thorough and the outcomes of assessment are analysed carefully. The information this provides is used effectively to guide pupils' learning and development.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory and have good features. The headteacher leads the school with purpose and, along with members of the senior management team, provides clear direction. The ethos of the school is extremely positive and the community spirit is strong. This makes for a cohesive and welcoming school which functions effectively day to day. Well judged developments in Reception and Key Stage 1 have brought about a rise in standards. Development in Key Stage 2 has been less effective and here there is scope for a further improvement in standards and teaching. Procedures for gathering information about the school's performance are extremely thorough and provide detailed information. Priorities for development stem logically from the school's analysis of this information although, at times, evaluation tends to focus on the detail rather than the big picture, making whole school issues more difficult to spot and respond to. The improvement the school has made since it was last inspected and the school's capacity to improve in the future are satisfactory. Coordinators manage their subjects conscientiously. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is managed with skill and considerable attention to detail by the headteacher. Governors carry out their statutory responsibilities well and are actively involved in the life of the school.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	2
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	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 Wulstan's Roman Catholic School, Great Harwood

Rushton Street

Great Harwood

Lancashire

BB6 7JQ

15 January 2007

Dear Pupils

Thank you very much for the friendly welcome you gave me when I visited your school. Although I was with you for only two days, I thoroughly enjoyed finding out about the interesting things you do. A special thanks to those who talked with me about the school.

There were lots of things I liked about your school. It is clear that you are happy there and enjoy learning new things. It was nice to see how well Reception children have settled into school. I was impressed with the quality of work pupils do in Years 1 and 2. I know that the older classes have seen many changes of teachers over the years and think that you should be pleased that in the circumstances you are doing as well as you are. Just a word to Year 6 pupils who will be taking the tests later this year: I could tell that you are working hard and feel sure that when the time comes you will do your very best, so try not to get too concerned about them. Your attendance is good and I am pleased that you feel you can go to any member of staff if anything is bothering you. I like the way older pupils willingly take on responsibilities around school by becoming prefects or buddies. Everyone I saw was behaving well but I was told that a small number of pupils can be unfriendly towards others in the playground. This needs to stop. I thoroughly enjoyed the assembly I attended and think those who received a certificate or a prize have every right to be proud of themselves!

While I was in school, I pointed out a few things that I felt would help to make it even better. These are the sorts of things I suggested:

- help older pupils to reach even higher standards and make sure that they always have lessons that get the very best from them
- you can help by always thinking hard in lessons, trying to work things out for yourselves and asking your own questions if there is something you are interested in or want to know.

Best wishes

Keith Bardon

(School inspector)