



# St John The Baptist Roman Catholic Primary School, Padiham

Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 119648  
**Local Authority** Lancashire  
**Inspection number** 291492  
**Inspection dates** 5–6 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Brian Dower

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	St John's Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Padiham, Burnley
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		Lancashire, BB12 7BN
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01282 771146
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	250	<b>Fax number</b>	01282 776047
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr James Aston-Kilgallon
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr John Carroll
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 March 2002		

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<b>Age group</b> 3–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 5–6 October 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 291492
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

St John's is an average sized Roman Catholic primary school for pupils aged between 3 and 11. It serves an area with higher than usual levels of social and economic deprivation on the southern edge of Padiham, near Burnley. The school's population is mainly White British and no pupil speaks English as a second language. Attainment on entry to the Nursery is below what is usual for children of that age. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

St John's is a good school with some outstanding features. It enjoys the overwhelming support of parents, who are united in their praise for what the school achieves. Teachers, their assistants and the pupils enjoy working together and they care for each other. The curriculum is good. Assemblies and musical and drama performances capture that sense of fun and excitement, which does so much to inspire the children. This sense of common purpose stems from the headteacher's excellent leadership and the exemplary support he receives from his able senior colleagues and the staff as a whole. Morale is high. Christian values and the Catholic faith drive pupils' outstanding spiritual and moral development. Pupils feel safe and secure in this school, confident that their welfare and safety come first. They are closely involved with the church and parish events and undertake many charitable activities. They have the basic skills and personal qualities for future success. The headteacher of one of the local high schools speaks of the 'caring, welcoming and energetic atmosphere in which pupils learn', a sentiment echoed by many parents.

Achievement is good and standards are above average. Currently, significant progress is being made in raising standards further. This is most evident in the Foundation Stage where progress is very good and children rapidly overcome their initial difficulties in speaking about themselves and their work. Standards in mathematics by the end of Year 6, although above average, still do not meet the school's own exacting high expectations and the subject is a priority for further development.

Pupils' personal development is good and aspects such as their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development and their sensitivity to each other's needs are exemplary. The attitude of boys to their learning has improved greatly in recent years and they are now keen and fully involved in school life. Attendance is satisfactory and improving.

Teaching and learning are good and at times outstanding. The challenge facing the school is to bring satisfactory teaching to the standard of the best, particularly in mathematics. Also, in some lessons, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to work practically or solve problems. The care and support afforded to pupils are outstanding and the school's excellent tracking of pupils' progress enables teachers to spot underachievement quickly and take effective action to remedy weaknesses.

Leadership and management are good and there are aspects of leadership which are outstanding. In particular, the headteacher motivates and inspires all who work in the school. The inspectors received confirmation of this from many quarters within and beyond the school. The school is looking at ways to improve the management of mathematics in order to drive up standards. Governance is good, with effective financial management and deployment of resources. The school gives good value for money. The significant improvement in results since the previous inspection and the effective teamwork and cohesion of the staff show clearly that the school is strongly placed to raise standards further.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching in mathematics.
- Provide pupils with more opportunities to learn through doing and thinking through problems for themselves.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Achievement is good and standards are above average. Progress and achievement throughout the school are good for boys and girls and for all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Standards in the Foundation Stage have improved significantly over the last two years. Children enter the Nursery with poorly developed speaking skills, but make excellent progress and leave Reception attaining above nationally expected standards for children this age, particularly in physical and creative development. Results in national tests in 2005 at the end of Year 2 were average and progress was good. Test results improved in 2006, with a significant increase in the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3.

Pupils' performance in tests in 2005 at the end of Year 6 was broadly average and progress good considering the pupils' below average attainment at the start of Year 3. Results in 2006 were better than in 2005, particularly in the proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 5 in English and science. Results in mathematics, although generally above average by the end of Year 6, have not met the school's own challenging targets for the subject and remain a priority for improvement. The school's excellent tracking system shows that these overall higher standards are being maintained in the present academic year.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils are proud of their achievements, which are celebrated regularly in the school's 'Golden Book'. Excellent relationships with adults and between pupils are based on respect for all and reflect the school's strong Christian ethos. Pupils are enthusiastic learners and their behaviour and attitudes to work are good. Older pupils are confident and their mature attitudes and developing skills stand them in good stead for the next phase of education. They are polite and courteous. Children in the Foundation Stage quickly develop the social skills necessary for school. Throughout the school, pupils care for one another and are confident to talk to staff about any matters. An outstanding feature is the way that pupils in Year 6, identified as 'gardeners', are paired with children in Reception, identified as 'seeds', supporting their partners and guiding them in many aspects of their development. Pupils feel safe and happy and appreciate all the school has to offer. They play safely and understand the importance of healthy eating.

Pupils have a very clear understanding of right and wrong. They show compassion towards others and are involved in a number of fundraising activities, such as the 'Africa Day' observed during the inspection. Pupils of all ages contribute to decision making through the school council. They welcome the many opportunities to take on responsibilities throughout the school and make an excellent contribution to their community.

Attendance is satisfactory but improving since the agreement of local schools to align term dates with national holiday patterns.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good and at times outstanding. All teachers have good subject knowledge and have built excellent working relationships with the children. They expect the most from their pupils and take an encouraging and supportive approach to each individual. Lesson planning makes good provision for the different ability levels in each class and assistants are deployed well to support those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Group work is structured to allow for pupils of similar ability to challenge and help each other and make good progress. Assessments are used effectively to help pupils improve their work by setting targets for learning in literacy and numeracy. Pupils are involved well in evaluating their performance against these targets and this helps them make faster progress. In the best teaching, pupils are actively involved in learning and they are expected to think things through for themselves. Pupils in Year 6 learned to use fractions when comparing different shapes, a difficult concept for them to grasp, but they got there because they had practical problems to think about and solve. The challenge facing the school is to raise the quality of all teaching to that of the best.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good, with all the required subjects taught in all age groups. National strategies and guidelines are used to ensure that learning is steadily built upon year by year. Good provision is made across the curriculum for developing pupils' skills in literacy, and the use of computer technology as a learning tool is well established. Pupils enjoy their work because teachers develop the fun aspect of the curriculum and because they have many opportunities to extend their knowledge and enjoyment of their work outside the classroom. They enjoy a wide range of outings and after-school activities, and sports are varied and well attended. The school is now looking to improve after-school sport for girls. The performing arts are strong. Assemblies and performances are lively and exciting. This is yet another reason why pupils like coming to this school. The school cannot enhance this very good provision because it has no access to a modern and purpose built stage. The provision for physical and creative

development for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. The school is doing much to increase pupils' awareness of Britain as a country of ethnic diversity and different faiths, as well as their appreciation of their own culture and heritage.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school judges its care, guidance and support of pupils to be good but inspectors found provision to be outstanding. Staff know pupils and their families very well, exemplifying the school's mission for all to 'love one another'. Parents and pupils agree that the school is a secure and safe place. Arrangements for children starting in Reception are very good and a strong relationship is forged with parents. As a result, children settle quickly into school routines. Procedures for child protection, health and safety and the safeguarding of pupils are robust. Effective communication between staff, parents and external agencies ensures that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive carefully focused support that meets their needs. The school has excellent procedures that monitor and track pupils' achievements. Consequently, the school has a good knowledge and understanding of the learning needs of individual pupils and where there are areas of learning that need to be improved. Pupils are involved in discussions about their progress, guided by the targets for learning established in literacy and numeracy. As a result, teachers, pupils and parents have a secure understanding of what pupils need to do to improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good, with some aspects that are outstanding. The headteacher and his senior colleagues have a clear vision for the school's future direction and what needs to be done to improve. Their track record in securing recent improvements is impressive and, in partnership with the governors, they have the capacity to make this an outstanding school. It is a united and harmonious community, built on respect and Christian values. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good, with a strong emphasis on teamwork. The subject management is generally good but the mathematics coordinator is not given sufficient opportunity to share her expertise in order to raise standards further. The headteacher is held in high regard and his leadership is responsible for the shared sense of common purpose that permeates the staff team. He is well supported by his experienced and able senior colleagues and by governors who are the school's enthusiastic advocates. Governors have a good understanding of the school's work and have a commitment to sustaining its role as a hub of the community. The school is adequately staffed and resources are managed well to promote pupils' good achievement.

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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>	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	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

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

<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	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<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>	1

<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>	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	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

St John the Baptist Roman Catholic Primary School

St John's Road

Padiham

Burnley

Lancashire

BB12 7BN

7 October 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you for welcoming us during the recent inspection. We enjoyed our visit and were impressed by your hard work and the pleasant and friendly atmosphere throughout your school. Many of you spent time talking to us and we found your comments helpful in understanding what you are good at and what you enjoy. There are many things that you and your teachers do well together and these are just a few.

- You and your teachers enjoy school and work hard and you make good progress.
- The teachers do a lot to make lessons fun. You told us how you receive a lot of praise for what you do and that this gives you the confidence to try even harder with your work.
- You care for each other and the older pupils do a lot to support and help the younger ones. We were very impressed with this.
- You have the skills and personal qualities to be successful in your lives.
- Your school is a safe and happy place to work and you know that every adult who works there wants you to do well and feel appreciated.
- You know right from wrong and you want to help others as much as possible.

We know that some of you find mathematics difficult. Your teachers are now looking at ways to give more help to those of you who struggle to understand the subject. Many of you told us that you like to learn through doing things and that lessons are best when you have to work together to solve problems. Your teachers are going to give you more opportunities to do this.

Our best wishes to you all. We know you will continue to enjoy your education at St John's and that you will take happy memories with you when you leave to go to high school.

Yours sincerely

Brian Dower and Michael Onyon