

Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Primary School, Colne

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119653
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	291493
Inspection dates	3–4 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Jennie Platt

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Joseph Sweeney
Headteacher	Mr Peter Cunningham
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2002
School address	Red Lane Colne Lancashire BB8 7JR
Telephone number	01282 864362
Fax number	01282 866676

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is slightly smaller than the average sized school. The area the school serves is more socially and economically disadvantaged than the national picture. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A few pupils need support because English is not their first spoken language. The number eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The school provides private Nursery education and also care for children before and after school. The school has two Basic Skills Agency Quality marks and an award for the Best Environmental Space In Lancashire by the Lancashire Environment Fund.

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 some good features. Pupils' good personal development is at the heart of the school and leads to a happy atmosphere. Pupils enjoy school and attendance is above average. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is a real strength; pupils are reflective and appreciate they have a responsibility to look after each other and the environment. This is very much a community school and pupils play a full role in the locality supporting many special events.

Achievement is satisfactory. Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and so children make sound progress and reach the level expected for their age by the end of the Reception class. They often exceed this level in their personal development and creative skills, which are taught well. At the end of Year 2, teacher assessments show standards are broadly average. Mathematics and reading are higher than writing because more pupils exceed the level expected for their age. Results of national tests at the end of Year 6 have fluctuated recently but the trend over time shows overall achievement is satisfactory. Standards are broadly average in mathematics and English. Writing is the weakest aspect of English because the more able pupils do not achieve as well as they could and few pupils exceed the level expected for their age. This is not the case in science where standards are above average because a high proportion reaches the higher level. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is effective and they make good progress.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with examples of good lessons, especially in the more practical aspects of numeracy and science. Relationships are good and lessons are well organised and run smoothly. The pace of some lessons is too slow and tasks are not sufficiently challenging, especially for the more able pupils. The curriculum is good and pupils appreciate the visits, visitors and clubs, which they describe as their favourite aspects of the school. This is a caring school and pupils say they feel safe. They know how to keep healthy and recall important messages about the danger of drugs and how to care for themselves. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools Award.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Governors and staff are keen to improve facilities for the pupils and have worked hard to keep the disturbance caused by the building work to a minimum. Good attention is given to professional development and the school has Investor in People status. The school's self-evaluation is satisfactory. It correctly identifies many strengths, but is too positive in some areas because the monitoring of teaching and pupils' academic performance is not sufficiently rigorous. For example, the tracking of pupils' progress checks achievement at the end of each year, but does not identify whether pupils underachieve at any time during the year. The school does not make enough use of information from self-evaluation when deciding the priorities that will have the most impact on standards. As a result, capacity to improve and improvement since the last inspection are satisfactory and the school provides satisfactory value for money.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the pace and challenge in lessons to ensure that the more able pupils make enough progress, especially in writing.
- Improve the tracking of pupils' progress to keep a closer eye on their achievement during the year.
- Make the monitoring of performance and teaching more rigorous and use this information when identifying the key priorities for improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Overall achievement is satisfactory. From a starting point typical for their age, children in the Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress. Most reach the standards expected for their age by the end of the Reception class. The strong focus on independent learning and a creative curriculum lead to good progress and higher standards in personal, social and creative development.

Progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Results of teachers' assessments at the end of Year 2 have been above average but dipped in 2006 because of a high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties. Current standards are average in reading, writing and mathematics. Results of national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 have been more variable over recent years, but standards are broadly average in English and mathematics and above average in science. The strength is in science because a high percentage of pupils exceed the level expected for this age. This is not the case in English. Writing is not as high as the other subjects throughout the school because the more able pupils are not making enough progress. The school was close to meeting its targets in 2006 and a similar picture is predicted this year.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. The few pupils learning English as an additional language are new to school and it is difficult to assess their progress but they have settled well to school life. There is no significant difference between the achievements of boys and girls.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They have positive attitudes to their work and enjoy learning. Their attendance is above average. Behaviour is good and pupils relate well to each other and to adults. The imaginative approaches to teaching pupils about keeping themselves safe are clearly effective since pupils say they know how to look after themselves.

The school's Catholic values are very evident on a daily basis and provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Spirituality is excellent and pupils make good use of time available to pause and be reflective. The school is a strong community, and pupils celebrate together and encourage each other to achieve. The school council provides a forum for pupils, and councillors feel they have a say in important aspects of school life. The school has close links with the wider community. The school's ECO status, for example, successfully promotes gardening projects, bee keeping and a desire to care for the environment. Cultural awareness is extended through good links with a Columbian project 'Espiritu' in which the school is supporting efforts to replace drug production with fruit growing. This also supports the good understanding of healthy lifestyles. The focus on moral and social development leads to pupils

becoming mature, considerate and caring adults. The majority have secure skills in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) and are well prepared for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The school's self-evaluation that they are excellent is at odds with the evidence of the inspection and the achievement of the pupils. Nevertheless, some good lessons were seen, especially in numeracy and science where the focus on practical activities made lessons more interesting for pupils. These lessons were brisk and included sufficient challenge to ensure effective learning. In other lessons, expectations were not high enough because tasks did not match pupils' ability enough and included too much filling in of worksheets. This especially restricts the opportunities for more able pupils to write independently.

Throughout the school, classrooms are stimulating learning places, made attractive with pupils' work and with imaginative prompts to guide pupils. Lessons are managed well and run smoothly. Staff are sensitive to the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and are guided by detailed individual plans that are adjusted weekly to ensure that, when one target is reached, a more challenging one is set. Marking is satisfactory. Staff check work carefully and, in the best examples, tell pupils how to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and contributes well to pupils' learning and their personal development. The school's determination to provide a caring school is evident in the focus on personal and social development, which improves pupils' attitudes to learning and enables them to play a full part in the curriculum. Pupils with learning difficulties and those learning English as an additional language are fully included in all activities. However, the school is at the early stages of providing for pupils assessed as specially gifted or talented.

The school's new approach to grouping subjects together is accelerating learning as tasks are more relevant to pupils. For example, the making of the lamella phones, an instrument with African origins, included design and technology, music, ICT and literacy and numeracy skills. As a result of these themes, pupils learn to apply their previously learned skills and knowledge to other areas. Dance and creative skills are not forgotten and promoted well with the help of visiting specialists. The school provides good quality extra-curricular provision in the form of sporting events, clubs and music. All opportunities for enrichment have a high take-up by pupils and the sporting activities make a good contribution to them keeping healthy.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The pastoral care of pupils is good and stronger than the educational guidance they receive. Staff are highly committed to the care and well-being of their pupils. Safeguarding procedures are in place. Adults in contact with pupils are carefully vetted for suitability. Good procedures and a caring ethos minimise bullying and tackle any incidents of harassment. Pupils at risk are

identified and given appropriate support, especially by the learning mentor. The Rainbow group is particularly good at providing counselling for vulnerable pupils in school.

Support and guidance for learning are satisfactory. The school tracks pupils' progress from year to year and uses this information well to identify pupils who need extra help. However, termly assessments are not in place to check closely and offer that extra boost when it is needed during the year. Good examples of involving pupils in planning their own learning were seen in Year 5 but this good practice is underdeveloped in other years.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Financial management is good and the headteacher is very skilled at accessing additional funding for new building work, which has improved the accommodation. All involved in the school share a vision to ensure that pupils enjoy school and receive a rich experience. In this, the school is successful.

The management of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good and meticulous documentation ensures that the needs of these pupils are fully met. Management of subjects is satisfactory. Self-evaluation includes collaboration with staff and governors but lacks rigour. Not enough use is made of the evidence now available concerning the pupils' progress. Teaching is monitored and strengths celebrated but areas to develop are not clearly recognised. As a result, the school is overestimating its effectiveness and the school's development plan is not clearly identifying key priorities for improvement. Consequently, progress since the last inspection and capacity to improve are satisfactory.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors are highly supportive of the school and have established links with classes to extend their first-hand knowledge of what is happening in school.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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	3
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

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	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	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

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	3
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

9 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Primary School, Colne, BB8 7JR

Thank you very much for the kindness you showed to the inspectors when we visited your school. We enjoyed our visit, and your friendliness and eagerness to tell us about your school have helped in the writing of this report. We think your school gives you a satisfactory quality of education and that your personal development is good. It was good to see you playing happily together and we are pleased you know the importance of keeping safe and healthy. You told us you really enjoy the many clubs available and you are correct that these are good and make school more exciting. We were impressed by how much you care for others and raise considerable amounts of money for them. You also know it is important to look after the environment and have earned ECO status. Congratulations!

You all make satisfactory progress and work hard, although a few could be set even more difficult work so that you can achieve more, especially in writing. You make a good contribution to your progress by attending regularly and behaving well. We think you could make a bigger contribution if your progress was checked more regularly and you were clearer about how to improve. Teachers are going to give you this extra information.

We are sure you will have many happy memories of your time at school and we wish you well for the future.

Best wishes

Mrs J E Platt and Mrs E Fenwick

Inspectors