



Anderton St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119668
Local Authority Lancashire
Inspection number 291498
Inspection date 25 January 2007
Reporting inspector Geoffrey Yates

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Rothwell Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Anderton, Chorley
Age range of pupils	4-11		Lancashire, PR6 9LZ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01257 480598
Number on roll (school)	144	Fax number	0157 485886
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Bernard Hayes
		Headteacher	Mrs Marie-Therese Bamber
Date of previous school inspection	1 April 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is smaller than most primary schools but numbers have increased in recent years. It serves a semi-rural area of mostly private housing. The majority of pupils are White British. The proportion eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. On entry into the school children's attainment is broadly average.

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 results improving year on year. Parents are very pleased with the quality of education it offers. The school provides good value for money and is true to its Christian foundation. Inspection judgements match those of the school's self-evaluation, which is accurate and searching and indicates senior staff recognise the strengths and areas for development well. Good improvements have been made since the previous inspection.

Pupils enter the school with skills that are average for their age; they soon settle into school life in the Reception class. They make good progress and attain above average standards in mathematics and science and significantly above average standards in English by the time they leave. This helps pupils prepare well for their future economic well-being. Standards of attainment over previous years in mathematics have not been as high as those in English. The school is very aware that more needs to be done to address this issue.

Pupils' personal development is good and pupils are very proud of their school's achievements. One pupil said he was proud of, 'the way we all treat each other fairly'. The pupils enjoy school is good, as reflected in their above average attendance. Pupils behave well and their contribution to the community is manifest in the large amount of money they raise for charitable causes. Pupils enjoy and benefit greatly from the very good range of sporting activities, and they know how to lead a healthy lifestyle.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers organise activities that offer a good level of challenge to pupils of different abilities, particularly so in Year 2. The curriculum is good and there are strengths in the ways staff enrich learning through a variety of projects and visits. The care and guidance of pupils are also good. Staff know the pupils well and quickly recognise where help may be needed; the support for those with learning difficulties and disabilities is a strong feature.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The newly appointed headteacher, very ably supported by the deputy headteacher, has accurately identified the key areas that will move the school forward. One parent commented, 'Many fresh ideas have come with her and I feel the school will benefit immensely.' School curriculum leaders recognise that they should be far more actively involved in the leadership and management of their subjects and plans are in place for this to happen. Governance is good. The school is well placed to make further progress and has a good capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in mathematics so that pupils attain as well as they do in English.
- Ensure plans to involve curriculum leaders more in the monitoring and evaluation of their subjects are implemented effectively.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress, demonstrate good achievement and reach above average standards. The demanding targets set in English and mathematics were exceeded in the most recent national curriculum tests. When children start school, their knowledge and skills are those expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress. By the time they enter Year 1, most meet the national expectations for children of that age. Good progress in Years 1 to 6 ensures above average standards at the end of both key stages. In the 2006 Year 6 National Curriculum tests, results were very high compared with the national average, at the expected level and at the higher level, especially in English. The value added from Years 3 to 6 in English placed the school in the top ten per cent nationally. The value added with regard to progress in mathematics is not as high. The school recognizes that more emphasis needs to be placed on narrowing the gap between the results in the two subjects. Inspection evidence demonstrates that standards in English, mathematics and science continue to be above average. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress because of the good quality support they receive. There is some evidence of gender differences in overall results but no discernible pattern. A particular strength is the very good performance of boys in Year 2 in developing their writing skills.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. The school ensures that its Christian values permeate all aspects of school life. Pupils enjoy coming to school and thrive in the school's warm and supportive atmosphere. They get a good start in the Reception class, where they learn to get on well together and enjoy learning. Pupils respond well in lessons and are polite and keen to learn. Their behaviour is good overall. They are fully involved in the decision-making process and make a good contribution to the school and wider community through their work on the school council and their charity work. For instance, the pupils raised a large amount of money for the Cafod charity. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. The very good range of after-school physical education activities contributes well to this. Pupils' attendance rate is above the national average and as such reflects parents and pupils' satisfaction with all the school provides.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Good relationships encourage pupils and they are eager to learn. Teachers keep up a brisk pace and help pupils to meet high expectations

by asking questions that require them to think hard and justify answers. Lessons are planned well, taking good account of pupils' previous learning. The use of single age group teaching in Years 3 to 6 allows most pupils to achieve well, especially in English. However, pupils are not always challenged sufficiently in numeracy lessons to achieve their best and some teaching is over-directive. In the Reception class, the warm relationships ensure that children develop the confidence to choose from a wide range of well organised activities. Throughout the school, teachers and teaching assistants work well as a team and with enthusiasm. They encourage pupils in their learning and use a range of techniques to make lessons enjoyable. For example, at the end of one lesson, pupils confidently took on the role of fictitious characters to answer questions from their classmates. The recently installed interactive whiteboards are beginning to be used to good effect. There is outstanding practice in the use of detailed marking in Year 2 and, as a result, pupils make accelerated progress. Teachers' marking gives satisfactory direction for pupils' learning in most classes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good overall and meets the learning needs of all pupils. The school is planning to extend learning opportunities so pupils develop their skills, including using computers and writing, in various subjects. A wide range of visits, including residential trips, visitors and a very good number of after-school activities, enrich the curriculum. These provide first-hand learning and promote pupils' personal and social development. The lessons related to personal and social development help the pupils to become safe and environmentally aware citizens. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good and supports pupils' learning well, with good use of role play to develop pupils' language skills. The outside area is not fully integrated into the curriculum. The school building has its limitations but all members of staff work hard to ensure that classrooms are organized well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Good arrangements for the welfare and safety of pupils are reviewed regularly. All necessary health and safety arrangements and risk assessments are in place and, as a result, pupils say they feel very safe. Pupils receive good personal care and guidance because of the good knowledge that staff have of individual pupils and their families. Well-established procedures, including good links with local pre-school providers, help pupils settle quickly into school. Good links with secondary schools ensure smooth transfers at the end of Year 6. Assessment and tracking of pupils' progress are good but there is some inconsistency in the use made of the information gathered. There is outstanding practice in Year 2, where pupils confidently talk about what they need to do to improve their work. There is very good use made of marking information in that class. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are closely monitored and they receive effective well-directed support. The school works hard to

involve parents in their children's learning and parents are pleased with what the school provides.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The newly appointed headteacher and existing deputy headteacher form a strong team. Despite the above average standards pupils achieve, they are highly focused on ensuring continuous improvement. As a result, there are plans to involve curriculum leaders more in monitoring and evaluating their subjects. The school accurately evaluates its work, identifying appropriate areas for action. There is a well structured and effective school improvement plan that is sharply focused on what is expected from its actions. Governors are fully involved in the life and work of the school and have a good understanding of its performance. The school has good links with parents who are encouraged to take a full part in their children's learning. Pupils are also consulted about their views. The school has made good improvements since the previous inspection and is well placed to move even further forward.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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	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?	2
The standards ¹ 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

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?	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.

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	3
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

Anderton St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Rothwell Road

Anderton

Chorley

Lancashire

PR6 9LZ

28 January 2007

Dear Children

Thank you very much for welcoming me and answering all my questions so politely. Your school provides a good standard of education.

I was really impressed with how well you all work and play together. You look after each other, enjoy your learning and your behaviour is good. You really appreciate being part of the school. You look forward to all the after-school activities and the interesting things that you do on your visits out of school. Your headteacher, staff and governors all work very well together and make sure that your school keeps improving. They take good care of you and help you to learn about keeping safe and healthy.

I have asked your school to help you to do even better in mathematics. I have also asked your school to make sure that the teachers who are responsible for different subjects get to see what is happening in their subjects across the school. This will help them try to make sure that the school's curriculum is as good as it possibly can be.

I really enjoyed my visit to your school and I hope that you all do your best in future to make sure that St Joseph's continues to be at least a good school.

Yours sincerely

Geoff Yates

Lead inspector