



SS Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School, Mawdesley

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119678
Local Authority Lancashire
Inspection number 291503
Inspection date 1 February 2007
Reporting inspector Eric Jackson

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Ridley Lane
School category	Voluntary aided		Mawdesley, Ormskirk
Age range of pupils	4-11		Lancashire, L40 3PP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01704 822216
Number on roll (school)	72	Fax number	01704 822216
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr John Cobham
		Headteacher	Miss Patricia Coulthard
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average Catholic primary school in a rural area. Very few pupils are eligible for free school meals and the proportion of pupils identified with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. Most pupils are White British, with a small number of pupils of mixed heritage. All are English speakers. Each class has at least two year groups and Class 3 includes Years 4, 5 and 6.

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. It provides a good education for its pupils, who achieve well. They say that they enjoy their time here, and clearly do. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and parish communities. They are well-equipped for the future by the time that they leave the school. Parents are very supportive. One said, 'The school is managed with great professionalism to maintain its high standards.' This follows a period of instability when the school was without a permanent headteacher for some time.

Children's attainment on entry to Reception is generally above average, but varies year-on-year as numbers are small. The quality of provision in Reception is good; children make good progress, especially in reading and physical development. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well from their starting points. Some pupils in Key Stage 1 did not make as much progress as they could have done last year but this has been remedied. Attainment in the current Year 2 is above average overall but lower in writing, which is only average, than in reading and mathematics. Boys and girls are making good progress throughout the school. Standards are significantly above average in Year 6, as indicated by pupils' results in national tests.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They learn well because teaching is good. Two classes are taught by part-time teachers who keep each other well informed of pupils' progress and needs. The staff plan lessons effectively based on regular assessment of pupils' progress, but there is no consistent school-wide system to monitor pupils' achievement overall. The curriculum is good, enhanced by a good range of clubs and exciting enrichment through visits and visitors. Care, guidance and support are good. Almost all parents are impressed by the staff's commitment to children's well-being and progress. One wrote, 'This has been the most wonderful school for my little girl to develop into a young lady.'

Leadership and management, including governance, are good. They are the underlying reason for the pupils' good personal development. Pupils lead healthy lifestyles and have a good understanding of how to stay safe. The school's good self-evaluation has accurately identified the most pertinent areas for improvement. Staff do not yet monitor and evaluate the quality of provision in their areas of responsibility sufficiently, although recent training has started to have an impact. The school has maintained its strengths since the previous inspection. There is good capacity to improve further as new procedures become embedded.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing by the end of Year 2.
- Develop consistent methods to record and monitor pupils' progress and overall achievement.

- Involve all staff in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the school's provision to assist senior leadership and governors in planning for further development.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and standards well above average by the end of Year 6. Children in Reception make good progress and most achieve the early learning goals for their age in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. A good proportion exceed them.

End of key stage assessments in Year 2 were significantly above average overall in 2005, but lower in writing. Results fell to below average in 2006 because this was a lower attaining group at entry, and the summer born pupils did not achieve as well as others nationally. Measures put in place to improve progress in Year 2 have been effective. In the current Year 2, pupils make good progress in lessons and standards are higher than last year.

In the 2006 national tests, Year 6 results were significantly higher than average levels, maintaining the school's high standards. Despite making satisfactory progress, boys did not make as much progress as girls. This is attributed by the school to the unenthusiastic attitude to learning of a few boys in that year group. Currently, progress in each class, from Reception to Year 6, is good, and boys and girls do equally well. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. Their well-being is promoted effectively throughout the school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, as is attendance. The school's fulfilment of its Catholic mission is strong, as when pupils say Grace reverently at the end of their meal. There is a relaxed, positive atmosphere throughout the school, founded on the good working relationships between pupils and staff. Year 6 pupils say that they have really enjoyed their time here, and feel that they have made good progress. They accept responsibility willingly; for example, as house captains or in helping younger pupils in difficulties. Pupils' behaviour is excellent, often commented on when they go out on visits. Parents say that their children are very well prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils explain how well they learn about safe practices, which is obvious during well-ordered gymnastics lessons and from their behaviour in the playground. They understand how to live a healthy lifestyle, exemplified by their high level of competence in swimming.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Some outstanding teaching was observed; for example, when the teacher's skilled scene-setting transported Year 4, 5 and 6 pupils into living history in role-play at the court of Henry VIII. Teaching is solidly good in each class. Lessons are well prepared to cater for the different ages and abilities in the mixed-age classes. The aims of the lessons are made clear, leading to good learning and progress in all subjects. Support staff make a good contribution to learning, particularly for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Year 1 pupils are often taught separately in the 'Blue Room', which makes good use of the accommodation and provides opportunities for a sharp focus on a single-age group. Pupils are increasingly involved in assessing their own work. Teachers' marking is clear and helpful in moving pupils on. The recording of pupils' progress is inconsistent however, which makes the monitoring of overall progress through the school too complex. Children in Reception benefit well from new outdoor play opportunities. In Years 2 and 3, pupils' gymnastic skills improve significantly in response to specialist teaching.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and meets all requirements; it is supported well by links with local schools and local authority services. English, mathematics and science have a high profile and there are good opportunities to develop information and communication technology (ICT) skills. Teachers plan carefully using themes, such as 'Toys' in Class 1 and 'The Caribbean' in Class 2 to ensure that the mixed-age classes receive their full learning entitlement. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are promoted well through these themes; pupils' speaking, listening and problem-solving skills develop well too. Good enrichment activities in the arts and sport add excitement and interest, as do the many extra-curricular opportunities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. All child protection and safeguarding measures are in place. Adults are vigilant in ensuring that the pupils' well-being and supporting their personal development. Children in Reception settle well and learning accelerates from there on. The few pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities receive good support and parents are involved at each stage of the planning for their learning. New plans are about to provide extended opportunities for able, gifted or talented pupils. Whilst the staff assess and mark pupils' work effectively, the recording and monitoring of pupils' work over time is inconsistent. This is identified as a priority in the school's draft development plan.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good, leading to good outcomes in pupils' achievement and personal development. The headteacher is well regarded by parents and pupils. Analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses is accurate; the draft improvement plan already pinpoints the development issues recognised in the inspection. Teachers and other staff are ready to support improvements as the new monitoring and evaluation procedures are implemented. The governing body is strong and individual governors are closely involved with the school. They have a good grasp of the school's status and feel that good performance management procedures support improvement well. The school's good record supports this view. High standards have been maintained since the previous inspection and there has been good improvement since then in many aspects, including accommodation and staffing levels.

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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	1
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	2
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

SS Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School,

Ridley Lane

Mawdesley

Ormskirk

Lancashire

L40 3PP

2 February 2007

Dear Children,

It was good to visit your school and to see how well you are getting on. You will remember that I came to check how well your school looks after you and helps you to learn.

First, though, let me thank you and all the people from your school who were kind enough to talk to me and give me their views about SS Peter and Paul Primary. You and your parents told me that it is a good school. I agree with you, and with them.

The children in Reception and Year 1 spotted my penguin tie, and told me how they had been studying these interesting birds. In fact, I found out that you learn many interesting things, and visit exciting places. I was taken back hundreds of years by Class 3 to Tudor times and the royal court – I thought I might lose my head! Class 2 showed me some good gymnastics sequences that they had practised. I was impressed.

Your school helps you to behave really well and to develop good social and personal skills. You certainly know a lot about keeping safe and being healthy. The staff also help you to make good progress in your lessons. By Year 6, most children in your school reach very high levels in English, mathematics and science. I know that your school has been trying to help you improve your writing skills, and I think some Year 2 children could do really well this year – I hope you do.

Your school has had some good improvements to the building recently, particularly the play area for Reception. The staff are planning further developments. They are working hard to get a clear picture of everything that goes on to decide where to make changes. They will also be developing better ways to check how well you are learning. I think they are right, as these changes could help you make even better progress by focusing sharply on what you need to do next to improve your work. You can help by continuing to work hard, behaving well and enjoying your time at the school. I'm sure you will.

May I thank you again, and wish you good success now and in your future lives.

Yours sincerely

Eric Jackson

Inspector