



# St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Preston

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 119700  
**Local Authority** Lancashire  
**Inspection number** 291508  
**Inspection dates** 10–11 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Gordon Alston

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>	Downing Street
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Preston, Lancashire
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		PR1 4RH
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01772 797397
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	153	<b>Fax number</b>	01772 655992
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Lorraine May
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr John Whalley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 November 2001		

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

This school serves an area with high levels of social deprivation, close to the centre of Preston. A well above average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. No pupil speaks English as an additional language. There is an above average proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Attainment on entry to the Nursery varies year on year but is usually well below average. The number of children entering the school has fallen over previous years, resulting in significant differences in the size of year groups. The school has been through a very difficult period of staffing instability. As a result, the school has received intensified support from the local authority, aimed at school improvement.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory and it gives satisfactory value for money. The school and the inspector agree on these judgements. A parent commented, 'Many children come from difficult home circumstances and school provides a safe, caring place where they feel valued and can succeed.' This is a significant strength of the otherwise satisfactory leadership and management. The headteacher, supported strongly by the deputy headteacher, has ensured that there is a high level of care that puts pupils' well-being at the forefront of school life. This sets a good climate in which children can learn. As a result, the school successfully develops well behaved, responsible pupils with good and positive attitudes to learning. The support given to pupils with emotional and behavioural problems is outstanding.

The school's success in raising pupils' academic achievement has not been as strong. This is mainly the result of a period of instability in staffing when the monitoring of the curriculum and of teaching and learning lacked rigour. Recent improvements in self-evaluation have strengthened this and have led to actions that are having a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning. Although these new initiatives have not had enough time to bring about significant improvements in standards, they show, along with the school's accurate evaluation of its performance and the satisfactory improvements made on the issues raised in the last report, that the school now has a good capacity to move forward.

Standards are below average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) but few reach the standards expected for their age when they move to Year 1. In Years 1 to 6, pupils make satisfactory progress. The 2005 national test results show that pupils by the end of Year 2 attained average standards but standards fell in Year 2 in 2006, reflecting the high proportion of pupils who have either learning or emotional difficulties. Standards in Year 6 were below average in the 2005 national tests in English, mathematics and science. Results were similar in the 2006 tests.

Teaching and learning in Key Stages 1 and 2 are satisfactory, with some good features, and there are clear signs that this is leading to improved progress in lessons. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 made brisk progress in their understanding of speech marks when they studied an extract from *Oliver Twist*. In the Foundation Stage, teaching is good because of the strong focus on developing language and personal skills. Pupils are motivated learners when teaching is lively and fast-paced. Recent improvements in setting targets and in the tracking of pupils' progress have led to higher expectations of teachers and pupils. Weaknesses occur when teachers talk for too long at the start of the lessons and when tasks are not well matched to pupils' abilities. This means that the work is sometimes either too easy or too hard and slows pupils' progress.

The curriculum is satisfactory and broadens pupils' experiences, such as learning a foreign language. Pupils relish the opportunities the school gives them to accept responsibility and make a meaningful contribution to the school community. Pupils

know how important it is to be active and stay safe. They enthusiastically attend out-of-school sporting clubs and strive to be healthy. The school provides a very friendly, caring environment for its pupils and parents.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Improve the satisfactory teaching by focusing on increasing the rate of progress made by pupils of all abilities in their lessons.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

In the Foundation Stage, children make good progress from their low starting points. Even so, by the end of Reception, most children have not reached the nationally expected levels in all areas of learning. In the 2005 national tests, standards were average at Year 2. Although the school's results in the national tests for 11-year-olds in 2005 were below average, the pupils made satisfactory progress from their starting points at the end of Year 2.

Pupils achieve satisfactorily. Standards in the 2006 tests fell in Year 2 and in Year 6 standards were similar to the 2005 results. This represents satisfactory progress across infant and junior classes. There is no difference between achievement of boys and girls. Currently, pupils make at least satisfactory progress in lessons. As a result of actions taken by the school, pupils' progress in lessons is improving, with some pupils making good progress. In a mathematics lesson in Year 2, for example, a practical approach resulted in the pupils developing a much improved understanding of 3-digit numbers and they made good progress in their learning.

The school is focusing on raising standards through setting challenging targets and the careful tracking of pupils' progress but it is too early to see the full impact of these initiatives on standards. Pupils with learning difficulties and /or disabilities achieve as well as their peers and, because of exceptional support, pupils with emotional problems have great success personally and academically.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Children in the Nursery make good progress in developing the personal, social and emotional skills they need to become mature young people. They learn to share and care for each other and develop a good understanding of children who are different from themselves. Although attendance is below average, pupils enjoy school and are most appreciative of the opportunities provided by their teachers. They successfully learn about living healthily and safely. Behaviour is good and pupils know that any bullying will be dealt with promptly. Occasionally, pupils with emotional problems become unsettled but the excellent support systems help calm them quickly. The school council gives pupils the

chance to influence decisions on a range of matters, for example improving playground equipment.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

In the Foundation Stage, teaching and learning are good and in other classes satisfactory with a number of good features. Typical features in lessons are:

- detailed planning and clear learning objectives so that pupils know what they are expected to learn
- good relationships between teachers and pupils that encourage pupils to try hard and successfully complete the task
- good classroom management that leads to good concentration and few disruptions
- effective work from classroom assistants, particularly for those pupils with extra learning needs and the most vulnerable .

The best lessons are exciting because teachers share their enthusiasm and make tasks interesting. Teachers confidently use the electronic whiteboard to sustain pupils' interest. When teaching was less successful, tasks were not sufficiently well pitched at the correct level for all levels of ability. As a result, some of the work was either too hard or too easy for some groups of pupils. A strong focus on learning through play and personal development in the Foundation Stage helps children grow in confidence to use their ability to try new experiences.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum meets pupils' needs satisfactorily. The school is working on improving the curriculum by focusing on developing creativity and linking subjects together to make learning relevant and enjoyable for the pupils. The curriculum contributes well to pupils' personal development but less so to their academic progress. The children enjoy the wide range of out-of-school activities, especially music and sporting clubs, which are well attended. A good range of visits and visitors also enriches the curriculum. In the Foundation Stage, provision for outdoor play is limited for Reception children. Pupils are beginning to make use of their literacy, numeracy, and information and communication skills (ICT) skills to help their learning in other subjects. Staff help raise pupils' awareness of the need for healthy eating, taking regular exercise and encourage them to take up additional sporting activities.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Procedures for safeguarding the children are good, including child protection practices. Pupils say that they feel very safe and secure in school and know there is always an

adult to turn to. This is reflected in the very caring ethos, safe environment and good relationships throughout the school. The effective monitoring of behaviour, attendance and individual needs means that challenges are identified quickly and overcome. Teachers know the pupils well. Satisfactory but improving procedures for tracking pupils' progress help teachers know the level of academic support that pupils need. Strong support is received from a range of outside agencies when the need occurs. Pupils with learning or emotional difficulties are very well supported in lessons by adults who reward successes, which boosts pupils' confidence and self-esteem. This ensures they are fully included in all that the school has to offer and achieve to the best of their capabilities.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory and improving. The school has successfully developed a shared vision that focuses more rigorously on the quality of teaching and learning and the progress pupils make. Senior managers are enthusiastic and committed to this clear vision. A good example is the introduction of rigorous assessment and target-setting procedures. Prior to this, the headteacher's role in monitoring teaching and standards was weakened by the instability caused by staff absences. As a result, delays occurred in the effective management of teaching and improving pupils' progress. Having now rectified these issues the headteacher has taken the opportunity to bring back the rigour in monitoring school performance. Re-established procedures for self-evaluation correctly identify key areas for improvement. Governance is satisfactory. The school gets good support from the governing body, which also acts as a critical friend to 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	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>	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	3

### 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	3
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	3

### 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>	3
<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	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

St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Preston

Downing Street

Preston

Lancashire

PR1 4RH

10 October 2006

Dear Children

I am writing this letter after thinking about the two enjoyable days I spent in your school. I came to see how good your school is, and you had just as important a role in this as your teachers. You did not let the school down in any way. Your friendliness, good behaviour and the way you get on with one another are a credit to you all. These qualities helped me to judge just how good your school is in helping you to grow and learn.

So, what did I think after these two days? The inspection found that your school is a satisfactory school with some good features. I always ask children their views of the school and one girl replied, 'Everyone is happy here and we care about each other.' She was right; your school is a happy and caring school. You have a good team of adults led by a hard-working headteacher and deputy where everyone wants you to do as well as you can, be happy, safe and healthy. Your teachers try to make learning interesting and arrange lots of visits for you to go on and visitors to talk to you. I was pleased to see how hard you work, and equally important how well everyone gets on. I saw lots of children who have responsibilities and jobs to do, and who do them well.

Everyone wants your school to become a good school and I have recommended your school to concentrate on specific things. I think you should be reaching higher standards in English and mathematics by the time you leave the school. In order to achieve this I have asked your teachers to really push you hard with your work to try and increase the progress you make in all lessons. I know some of you found the work a little easy at times and did not feel challenged. You can also help by telling your teachers if work is too easy or too hard. If the headteacher and deputy observe your learning in lessons and talk about the teaching with teachers this will help teachers improve.

I wish you well and good luck for the future.

Gordon Alston

Lead inspector