

# Priory Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	122815
<b>Local Authority</b>	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
<b>Inspection number</b>	292517
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Richard Cheetham

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 category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	165
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs K Holmes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs R Jones
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 November 2001
<b>School address</b>	Raglan Street Hill Top Eastwood Nottinghamshire NG16 3GT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01773713731
<b>Fax number</b>	01773535154

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Priory Catholic Primary School is smaller than average. The number on roll has increased slightly since the previous inspection. Nearly all pupils are from White British backgrounds with very few from minority ethnic groups. A small number are at an early stage of acquiring English as an additional language. The school serves an area of average socio-economic circumstances. Most pupils start school with standards similar to those expected for their age. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is average but varies significantly between year groups. Owing to staff turnover and illness, the school is currently employing a number of temporary teachers.

## 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 that provides good value for money. It includes all its pupils very well in the effective education it provides. It has a distinctive sense of community that promotes pupils' excellent personal development and well-being. Parents have few concerns and most think highly of the school. They support it very well by fundraising, helping in school and through the parent group. This comment was typical of many, 'We are very pleased with this school as a whole.'

The school has made good progress since its previous inspection and has a good capacity for further improvement. Pupils are helped to make good progress and achieve well. The standards they reach in Year 6 are mostly above average, although there are some differences from year to year. This is due to the widely differing proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities in each year group. These pupils make good, and sometimes excellent, progress towards their individual targets. Overall, good pupil achievement has largely been maintained despite some staff changes. One exception to this is in the Foundation Stage where this year, pupils are making only satisfactory progress. They are likely to reach expected levels but the class has been harder hit than others by three changes of teacher. The other variation in pupils' progress is that, across the school, they do not attain quite as highly in writing as they do in reading.

Leadership and management are effective. The school is in a period of staffing transition. The headteacher manages change successfully and leads the school well. She is supported by her competent staff who take on additional, temporary responsibilities and carry them out well. This is particularly true of the leaders of English, mathematics, information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education, who are helping to raise standards and improve provision. All teaching staff are involved in school self-evaluation and development planning. However, the development plan does not have precise ways of measuring the impact of its actions. This does not help governors, who are otherwise very supportive, to ask more searching questions to help the school improve further. The school tracks pupils' progress well so that it sets targets for improvement and judges its performance carefully. However, its current system is too slow to evaluate the progress of different groups very efficiently. Nonetheless, in close partnership with external expertise, the school provides excellent care, guidance and support for its pupils. Staff work together well to provide good quality teaching and learning, although not all consistently challenge pupils enough.

Pupils greatly enjoy their learning, largely because the school provides a good curriculum that engages their interests. However, although the Foundation Stage curriculum is satisfactory, it is similar to that of Key Stage 1 rather than tailored to the needs of younger children. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and they enjoy excellent relationships. They are concerned for their schoolmates and take pains to help each other to keep safe. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and are keen to take regular exercise. Older pupils especially make an excellent contribution to the school and wider community. Their good progress in basic skills and effective ways of working together contribute well to their future economic well-being.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' progress in the Foundation Stage and in writing.
- Devise a Foundation Stage curriculum that adheres more closely to the six areas of learning (the recommended curriculum for pupils of this age).

- Improve governors' effectiveness by assessing the outcomes of development plan priorities and analysing the progress of groups of pupils more efficiently.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils make good progress, achieve well and reach at least above average standards. Usually pupils make a good start in the Foundation Stage and reach at least the standard expected by the start of Year 1. They make slower progress in reading and writing than in other subjects in their Reception year. This year these pupils' progress has slowed to being only satisfactory owing to staff changes but they are likely to reach expected standards by Year 1. Throughout Key Stages 1 and 2, most pupils make good progress. In Year 2, pupils reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. By Year 6, pupils usually reach at least above average standards in English, mathematics and science. However, pupils' writing attainment is sometimes lower than that in reading. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make good progress towards their targets because their needs are assessed early and met very well. Pupils learning English as an additional language make similar progress to that of others because they receive extra support.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Pupils enjoy school immensely and thrive in a secure environment. They develop a mature approach towards learning and acquire skills that prepare them well very well for later life. Behaviour is exemplary and attitudes are excellent. This is demonstrated by above average attendance, punctuality and enthusiasm for learning. Most pupils eat healthily and participation in school sports clubs is high. Pupils enthusiastically organise fund-raising events in aid, for example, of the NSPCC. The school council has a strong influence in school life and has brought about improvements, such as the purchase and supervision of new playground equipment.

Overall, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Assemblies provide a focal point for the day and make a very strong contribution towards pupils' spiritual growth. Pupils played a major role in a special assembly when the Bishop led the school community in a moving service of rededication for the memorial garden. Cultural development has good features but has not been a high profile aspect in recent years.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is mostly good although, in the Foundation Stage at present, it is only satisfactory. New staff quickly get to know their pupils' learning needs through good handover arrangements and pupils accept the changes maturely. As one said, 'Change can be good.' Teachers manage lessons confidently, based on good subject knowledge. They are very well supported by learning assistants whose work enables pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities to make at least good progress. Teachers give careful explanations and pupils work well in groups to follow these up, although occasionally higher attaining pupils are not challenged enough. Pupils are keen to learn and take a pride in their work. The best practice in teachers' marking helps pupils know how to improve their work. In the Foundation Stage,

the most effective parts of lessons are when an adult works with a group but this leaves other pupils making slower progress with low level activities.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school offers a good curriculum that meets the needs of pupils. Literacy and numeracy skills are developed effectively through initiatives such as 'Big Writing' (opportunities for pupils to write longer pieces). Visits, visitors and an exciting range of extra-curricular activities enliven the curriculum. Special events, such as Africa Week, develop creativity effectively across subjects and make learning enjoyable. ICT is a more integral part of learning than at the last inspection. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are catered for very well. The Foundation Stage curriculum, although satisfactory, lacks richness and challenge. Currently, activities do not reflect closely the recommended areas of learning for children this age. A well-structured programme for personal, social and health education ensures that pupils across the school learn how to lead healthy lifestyles. The school uses its extensive grounds well, for example, to develop awareness of ecological issues. Pupils and adult helpers tend the allotment and sell and eat its produce.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Care, guidance and support are excellent. Very strong relationships underpin every aspect of school life. Pupils' welfare is paramount, pastoral care is excellent and everyone feels valued. Pupils and parents agree that there is a 'happy atmosphere'. Arrangements for child protection meet government requirements. Pupils know they can confide in a trusted adult. Very rare incidents of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with quickly and effectively. 'Playground Pals' (older pupils helping others) maintain the harmonious atmosphere in the dinner hall and playground. A flexible range of advice, guidance and support mechanisms ensures pupils thrive socially and academically. Parental confidence in the school is high.

The school's procedures for assessing progress are good and teachers are using information to help pupils improve. Learners are also becoming increasingly involved in assessing their own progress, but the school recognises that this needs to be more consistent.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The quality of leadership and management is good because the headteacher has put in place effective systems to manage the school and maintain good standards through a period of staffing change. She sets a clear direction for school improvement, maintains strong links with other local schools and works effectively with staff to support pupils' well-being and achievement. She manages the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities exceptionally well. Careful induction of new staff helps them make an effective contribution to its management. Detailed reports to governors enable them to support the school well. They do not challenge school decisions enough, partly because they do not evaluate the outcomes of development plan initiatives or have enough information about the progress of different pupil groups. However, the current records of pupils' progress ensure that all pupils are fully

included in what the school offers and are an important part of the school's self-evaluation. Governors and parents work well with the school to improve its resources.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<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?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
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>	1
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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
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.

## Annex A

**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	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	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**

4 May 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Priory Catholic Primary School, Eastwood, Nottinghamshire, NG16 3GT

Thank you very much for looking after us so well when we visited your school recently. You made us feel as though we were part of your strong school community. We think there are a lot of good things about your school.

These are the things we liked best.

- Your behaviour is excellent and you are growing up to be caring and responsible—so well done!
- You enjoy working hard and most of you make good progress.
- Everyone is given the help they need to succeed.
- The headteacher is leading your school well.

These are the things we have asked the headteacher to do to make your school even better.

- Help the youngest children make good progress and help you all to improve your writing.
- Make sure that the children in the Reception class have more exciting activities.
- Help the governors to know more about how you are getting on.

Thank you, once again, for being so helpful and friendly.

Best wishes,

Richard Cheetham

Lead Inspector