



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124349
Local Authority Staffordshire
Inspection number 292967
Inspection dates 28 February –1 March 2007
Reporting inspector Frances Gillam

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Hunter Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Cannock
Age range of pupils	3–10		WS11 0AE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01543 510380
Number on roll (school)	227	Fax number	01543 510383
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Vacant Position
		Headteacher	Stephen Breeze
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2002		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–10	28 February –1 March 2007	292967

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized primary school. Most pupils are White British and a small proportion come from minority ethnic groups. A small number of these are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils identified with learning difficulties is similar to most schools. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. Staff absence rates, some due to illness and maternity leave, have been high in Years 1 and 2 over the past three years.

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, where pupils achieve well in their work and where they make good progress in their personal development and well-being. Pupils enjoy school and their behaviour is extremely good. They look out for others and take very good care of themselves. Care, guidance and support are good and parents are right to feel their children are safe and well cared for. Pupils grow in confidence in the warm and friendly school environment. They make healthy choices about what to eat and take regular exercise because of the very good emphasis the school places on healthy life.

- Make sure pupils gain a better understanding of cultures other than their own.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and standards are above average by the time pupils leave the school. Children in the Foundation Stage do well. In the Nursery and Reception classes, well conceived activities build successfully on children's experiences and enable the children to explore and find things out for themselves. Children make good progress because basic skills are taught well and most achieve or exceed the goals for their age by the time they enter Year 1. This positive start is not always capitalised on in Year 1, particularly for the more able, because activities are not always sufficiently challenging. Pupils make good progress by Year 6. The focus on raising the achievement of the more able pupils is proving successful, particularly in Years 3 to 6, where pupils say the work is interesting and how much they enjoy a challenge, particularly in mathematics. Pupils produce some good quality work across subjects but pupils in Years 1 and 2 could be doing better in mathematics. Sometimes pupils complete activities, which do not challenge them to do their best or to use what they already know to solve calculations and figure out problems.

P' development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are very aware of healthy lifestyles and make very good choices about their diet and well-being. 'Play buddies' support pupils at break times and 'Help' boxes, found in every class, give pupils a useful avenue to express their concerns. These, along with the high standard of behaviour, contribute successfully to pupils' enjoyment of school and their good attendance. Pupils' relationships with and each other are very trusting and pupils show a high level of care for themselves and others. Pupils contribute well to the wider community through such activities as raising funds and providing musical performances in the local area. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong and work very well together, but their awareness of cultures other than their own is not so strong.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

In the Foundation Stage staff plan activities that spark children's erest and motivate learning. These enable children to do well and make a positive start to school. Sometimes, when pupils move into Year 1, this good rate of progress is not sustained. This is because lessons here sometimes lack pace, and activities do not always meet the needs of the pupils sufficiently well, especially the more able. In most classes staff

assess the achievements of pupils and use the information carefully to plan the next steps in learning. This enables most pupils to make good progress in their learning but sometimes in Years 1 and 2, tasks in mathematics do not always challenge pupils to do their best, and this hinders learning. In most classes, teachers explain clearly to pupils what they are going to learn and why. This helps pupils to settle quickly to their tasks and work hard. Learning support assistants play an important role supporting pupils with learning difficulties. They treat these pupils sensitively and praise their efforts; this builds the pupils' confidence and self-esteem.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils, including children in the Foundation Stage, experience a wide range of interesting learning activities, which promote literacy and numeracy and help to prepare pupils successfully for the future. Activities for the most part build well on what pupils have learned before, but not always in mathematics in Years 1 and 2. An extensive and exciting range of clubs and events outside normal lessons, including sports clubs and residential visits, support pupils' personal well-being and learning successfully, and contribute very well to their enjoyment of school. The school makes good use of teachers' expertise to develop the curriculum further, for example, staff with teaching strengths in modern foreign languages are introducing French and German for pupils in Years 3 and 4.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils say they feel safe and free from harm. This is because of the high level of care they receive and the well established child protection procedures. Children commented on the kindness of staff and the warm friendly atmosphere in the school. Staff treat pupils fairly and promote healthy lifestyles successfully. The very good work with the community police

to identify difficulties these pupils may be experiencing and whether they are doing well enough. The special educational needs co-ordinator has developed good processes to identify and support pupils with learning difficulties, which enables these pupils to make good progress. The school works extremely well with parents, who are very supportive. As a result, they play an active part in their children's learning.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to</i>	School Overall
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Leadership and management

How	2
How effective leaders and managers at all levels are in their selection leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	
How effectively performance is monitored	2

or

