

Cardinal Newman Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125237
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	293233
Inspection dates	25–26 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Christine Canniff

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	410
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Kevin Kilburn
Headteacher	Ms Gillian Keany
Date of previous school inspection	19 November 2001
School address	Arch Road Walton-on-Thames KT12 4QT
Telephone number	01932 222536
Fax number	01932 232638

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than most primary schools. It is located on the outskirts of Walton-on-Thames. Most pupils come from relatively advantaged backgrounds. Pupils' standards on entry to the Foundation Stage are generally above those expected nationally. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. More pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds than in most schools, with a significant number from White European backgrounds. Only a few are at the early stages of learning to speak English. The school holds the Healthy Schools' award and has achieved bronze level Eco School status.

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 outstanding features. The school places pupils' personal development, happiness and safety at the heart of its work and is a very welcoming place for children. Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. One commented, 'The school has a wonderful caring atmosphere like a huge family where children are nurtured and flourish'.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Their good attendance reflects their enjoyment of school. They talk with great enthusiasm about their work and what the school has to offer, and greatly appreciate the many additional activities that the school provides. Relationships are excellent. Pupils say that they 'take care of and care for each other' and this makes them feel happy. They understand very well the importance of healthy lifestyles and participate keenly in the wide range of physical activities provided. Rigorous procedures ensure pupils' safety and pupils are well aware of dangers inside and outside school. Pupils say that they feel safe in school.

Pupils in the Foundation Stage get off to a good start and make good progress. Effective support enables them to settle quickly and become confident learners. Achievement is good and standards are exceptionally and consistently high by Year 6. In the 2006 national tests, results for higher attaining pupils were not quite as high in mathematics as in English and science. The school has acted to improve this and standards have already improved. Pupils make good progress because teaching and learning, and the curriculum are good. The school has successfully improved curriculum planning for mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) and standards are higher than at the last inspection. In the many good lessons, expectations of pupils are high, pace is brisk and a good range of methods enhances pupils' learning skills. The school's effective monitoring shows that not all lessons are consistently of this quality. The pace of learning in most lessons is good but, in a small number of lessons, teachers do not always ensure that they challenge all pupils' thinking and extend discussion.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has developed a very strong sense of community and teamwork and is well supported by staff, governors and parents. The headteacher and deputy provide strong leadership. Together with senior managers they have created an effective team to initiate and drive improvements. Leaders analyse assessment and test data well and draw on this very effectively to target the needs of all pupils. The school has extended its tracking procedures to give teachers more frequent and detailed information about pupils' progress. Evaluation of this information is now more rigorous and very effective in identifying what needs to be done to raise pupils' achievement. The school's new computerised system is in the process of introduction and is intended to make the whole process more manageable for teachers. The school has successfully addressed the key issues from the last inspection and maintained the good achievement reported then. Standards are higher, particularly in mathematics and ICT. This is evidence of the school's good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve teaching and learning so that they are more consistently at the highest level to be found in the school to ensure that pupils are fully challenged in all lessons.
- Complete the introduction of streamlined systems of assessment to make the process less time-consuming for teachers.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well and standards are exceptionally high in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Children are assessed on entry to Reception and this information is used as the starting point for matching work to their needs. As a result, they make good progress in all aspects of their development. Standards in early writing skills are rising as a result of recent initiatives. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 continue to make good progress overall, although this is not always consistent from year to year. Pupils develop excellent mathematical skills and the school has successfully increased the number of pupils achieving Level 5 in mathematics. Pupils develop good reading skills. They become confident writers in a variety of styles because a greater emphasis on learning through drama and role play helps them to express their ideas more clearly. The very strong emphasis on investigation enables pupils to achieve consistently high standards in scientific skills and knowledge. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds make good progress because they receive good quality support that meets their needs well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Their concern for others is exceptionally well developed and they share a very strong sense of community. Pupils are very respectful of each other and work and play together harmoniously. They are prepared to listen to each other and demonstrate a very mature ability to understand others' points of view. Pupils display immense enthusiasm for and delight in learning. They thoroughly enjoy their lessons and are keen to participate in the stimulating opportunities offered. This is demonstrated in their above average attendance. Members of the school council take their role extremely seriously. Pupils very willingly take on responsibilities and contribute considerably to the life of the school and the local community. They regularly raise considerable funds for charity demonstrating concern for those less fortunate than themselves. Their very good skills and attitudes show that they are well prepared for future life in a multi-ethnic society. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and members of the school council regularly consult their peers to raise any concerns regarding safety at playtimes. This and attendance at lunchtime clubs foster their good behaviour. Pupils have an excellent awareness of healthy lifestyles. The value of proper nutrition and regular physical activity is fully understood. Pupils choose healthy snacks and happily take part in the 'Golden Boot' challenge and walk to school. There is a high level of participation in after school sporting activities. Pupils greatly enjoy taking part in local sporting competitions and tournaments and have been very successful. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education and for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and high expectations of their behaviour. This promotes a good working environment. Lessons have a clear focus and pupils are clear about what they are to do and learn. Teachers use a good range of techniques and resources to make lessons enjoyable and build pupils' understanding and skills. As a result, pupils have

positive attitudes to learning. The pace of most lessons is good, but teachers sometimes miss opportunities to challenge pupils' thinking by extending discussion or targeting questions at specific pupils. As a result of these inconsistencies, the pace of pupils' progress varies. Teachers use marking well to encourage pupils and often, but not always, show them how to improve a piece of work. However, pupils' targets are regularly evaluated and provide a clear picture of what they need to learn.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is well planned to meet the needs of all pupils. Sports and the arts have a high profile in the school. Good speaking and listening opportunities and an outstanding personal, social, health and citizenship programme contribute strongly to pupils' personal development and well-being. Provision for ICT has improved since the last inspection. Planning ensures that meaningful links are made between subjects, enhancing the relevance and interest of pupils' learning. For example, work in literacy was linked to history enabling pupils to draw on their historical knowledge as inspiration for their writing. The school is working to increase opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge and skills across a range of subjects. Excellent links with various groups and organisations provide outstanding enrichment. The extensive range of visits to places of interest, visitors to the school and popular after-school clubs make a very strong contribution to pupils' healthy lifestyles and their personal, social and academic skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school's outstanding, caring and supportive ethos promotes the well-being of all pupils and enables them to thrive in the very secure environment. It helps pupils to feel safe and nurtures their confidence and self-esteem. Pupils praise the work of adults, know their views are highly valued and that they have someone to turn to if they need help. Robust procedures for child protection ensure pupils' health and safety. Very thorough attention is paid to catering for pupils' personal needs. Vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties are identified at an early stage. The school works very closely with parents and outside agencies to ensure that pupils' differing personal and academic needs are well met. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are enabled to make good progress because the school makes extremely careful evaluations of their language needs. Teachers know their pupils very well. Assessment procedures are secure and informative. Very effective tracking has sharpened the focus on pupils' individual progress. This means that individuals or groups of pupils who may not be doing as well as they should are quickly identified and provided with the necessary support. The school is implementing a more streamlined system to make analysis of data and setting of targets less time consuming for teachers.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership team is good at evaluating the school's strengths and weaknesses and acts effectively to bring about improvement. Restructured staff teams have increased the effectiveness of leadership in English, mathematics and science, although other leaders are not yet fully involved in monitoring their subjects.

More effective analysis of data and other information means that the school has a clear idea of where pupils are and which groups or individuals would benefit from additional support. As a result, and because of the good progress pupils make, academic standards are exceptionally and consistently high by the time they leave the school and pupils make exceptional gains in their personal development. The governing body supports the school well and fulfils all its statutory responsibilities. The school has good partnerships with other schools, agencies and the local community, which further enhance pupils' achievement.

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Annex A

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	1
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
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	1
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

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?	1

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.

Annex A

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

10 July 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Cardinal Newman Catholic Primary School, Walton-on-Thames, KT12 4QT

Thank you for welcoming us to your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you and it was a pleasure to talk about your work and other activities at the school. We were able to see that yours is a good school. Some things are outstanding (which is another word for excellent).

You are polite and friendly and showed that you behave well. You told us that you like coming to school and greatly enjoy all the visits and visitors. The adults provide lots of interesting clubs which are extremely popular, particularly the sports activities. These give you lots of opportunities to learn new skills and improve others. As one of you said, 'This is a sporty school'.

Teachers work hard to make your lessons interesting and this is one reason you do well. By the time you leave in Year 6 your English, mathematics and science standards are much higher than we usually see. Teachers have worked hard to help you become good writers by providing enjoyable activities such as drama and role play so that you can explore your ideas. We saw some good lessons but, in a few, we felt that teachers could have made them a little more challenging. We have asked your teachers to make sure that all lessons are as good as the best ones.

Your school is a very welcoming place. This helps new arrivals to settle in quickly. The adults care for you very much and work hard to make sure that you are safe and happy. They keep a careful check on you so that if anyone has any problems they can sort them out. You help a lot by being kind and considerate and looking after each other.

The headteacher, teachers and other adults know how to make the school even better and are working together well for this to happen. To help them we have suggested that the headteacher do one more thing: to make sure that the new systems for keeping a close check on how well you are learning are up and running as soon as possible, so that keeping track of your progress takes up less of teachers' time.

Well done to you all and best wishes for the future.

Christine Canniff

Lead inspector