



Faith Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 134723
Local Authority Liverpool
Inspection number 300522
Inspection dates 28 February –1 March 2007
Reporting inspector Michael McIlroy HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Bute Street
School category	Voluntary aided		Liverpool
Age range of pupils	3–11		L5 3LA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0151 2071083
Number on roll (school)	89	Fax number	0151 2074993
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Dr B Denton
		Headteacher	Sister Meeghan
Date of previous school inspection	16 January 2006		

Age group 3–11	Inspection dates 28 February –1 March 2007	Inspection number 300522
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

This school is smaller than most primary schools and serves an area where social and economic deprivation is more than three times the national average. Nearly three quarters of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well above average. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. Nearly one third of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, which is well above the proportion found in most schools. The school includes a unit for a small number of pupils with complex learning needs.

The school holds the ActiveMark award and the Healthy Schools award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Following the inspection in January 2006 the school was judged to require improvement in relation to pupils' progress through Years 3 to 6 and to rates of attendance. In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

This is an improving school which provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Pupils enter the school with standards in learning that are well below average. They get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage and make good progress, particularly in their personal development and in their language skills. In Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress. In the most recent national assessments for Key Stage 2, there was a strong improvement in mathematics and science, but results in English declined. Overall, achievement is now satisfactory. Current pupils are making satisfactory progress in their learning and some are making good progress. Although overall standards have improved, they remain well below average. The school recognises this and knows that it has some way to go to fully redress previous underachievement.

Pupils' personal development and well-being is good. They enjoy coming to school and their behaviour is good. The school has left no stone unturned in seeking to raise attendance against the backdrop of very challenging circumstances. Although there has been some improvement in attendance, it remains stubbornly well below average. Nonetheless, this modest improvement has contributed to the rise in standards. The school's strong Christian and inclusive ethos is reflected in the good care and support which pupils receive. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully included in school activities. They are well supported by teaching assistants and recent changes in how they are taught have helped to increase their achievement. Pupils receive good guidance on how to stay healthy and safe. However, there is scope to improve the consistency of the quality of the academic guidance which pupils receive.

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides clear direction for the school's improvement and is committed to raising standards further. Subject management is satisfactory. Steps taken by the school since the last inspection have improved the quality of teaching and learning and this is now satisfactory overall. Work is now much more closely matched to the needs of pupils. However, there are some inconsistencies in how work is planned. A satisfactory curriculum is aptly focused on the core subjects and includes several activities that are aimed at enriching pupils' learning experiences and improving their already good personal development and well-being. Parents who returned questionnaires are very supportive of the school's work. Governance is now satisfactory. Governors strongly support the headteacher and are holding the school more to account for its work.

The recent improvements in attendance and the rise in standards and progress at Key Stage 2 demonstrate that the school has adequate capacity for further improvement and is now providing satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise progress and standards in English for all pupils.
- Increase the proportion of good teaching.
- Build on the recent initiatives to improve attendance.
- Improve the consistency and quality of academic guidance for pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils enter the school with standards in learning and skills which are well below average. Due to good teaching and the effective use of additional adults, they make good progress in the Foundation Stage, particularly in speaking and listening and personal and social development. However, by the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage most are still working below the standards expected for their age group because of their very low starting point. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1. In 2005, the attainment of pupils was close to the average. Standards declined in 2006 because in that year group almost half of pupils had learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Results in mathematics were better than those in reading and writing.

In Key Stage 2 in 2006, the progress made by pupils was satisfactory overall. This represents a strong improvement when compared with the progress made by pupils in 2005. Pupils achieved most strongly in mathematics and science, but did least well in English, due to weaknesses in pupils' writing. More able pupils made satisfactory progress. However, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities made good progress. Pupils eligible for free school meals also made adequate progress. Results in mathematics rose sharply and those in science also improved. However, standards in English declined. Results improved for more able pupils in all three subjects. Current pupils are making satisfactory progress in lessons and some are doing better. Although standards remain below average, inspection evidence and assessment data provided by the school indicate that standards are set to rise further.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The school judges this aspect of its work to be good and inspectors agree. From the moment pupils enter the Foundation Stage, the school works hard to develop their social and personal skills. Behaviour is good. Pupils are polite and courteous to visitors. Pupils feel safe in this orderly community. They are confident that adults will deal effectively with any worries or concerns they raise. Pupils described how much they enjoy coming to the school. Their positive attitudes in lessons and good behaviour in and around school confirm this. Pupils are aware of the benefits of a healthy diet and regular exercise. For example, many play sensibly with games equipment provided by the school at break times. There is also a good level of participation in extra-curricular activities. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. This

is reflected in the care, respect and consideration they show for each other. Pupils work well together. They have opportunities to exercise responsibility as monitors and as school councillors. Older pupils act as play leaders and help younger pupils play safely. Skills for their future economic well-being are satisfactorily developed. Attendance has improved but remains well below average, despite the school's many initiatives in this area. An increasing number of pupils are now reaching agreed attendance targets as a result of the effective work of the learning mentor.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Good relationships exist between learners and adults. Pupils are routinely made aware of what it is they have to do. Work is generally well matched to pupils' needs and is satisfactorily planned. However, teaching does not always fully engage pupils' attention. The improved level of challenge, particularly for more able pupils, is not yet high enough. Satisfactory use is made of assessment information to check pupils' progress and to plan work. Marking is satisfactory and some of it is good. However, not enough of it offers pupils sufficient guidance on the next steps they should take in order to improve their work. Where teaching is good, it is well planned, lively and fast paced. High expectations are evident. Classroom assistants are well used, as are resources, such as interactive whiteboards. Effective teaching in the Foundation Stage ensures that pupils make good progress from a very low starting point. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress due to good teaching, effective support from additional adults and early identification of their needs.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements. It is broad and balanced and there is an appropriate focus on the core subjects. Pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 have the opportunity to learn French. Additional lessons are held for more able pupils in English and mathematics. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities including netball, homework, guitar and 'Funky Food' clubs. Good links with Liverpool and Everton football teams provide opportunities for pupils to learn football skills. Many pupils benefit from residential visits, which are helping to broaden their experiences and raise their self-esteem. Learning is further enriched by visits to local museums and by a range of speakers and visitors, such as African dancers. Pupils' learning is supported by an appropriate level of homework.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with the school's view that this aspect of its work is satisfactory. The school's strong Christian ethos is reflected in the good care and support which pupils receive. There are good procedures to ensure their health and safety. Pupils receive guidance on the dangers of hazardous substances. They are well supervised in and around the school. Child protection procedures are fully in place. Risk assessments are regularly reviewed.

There are effective induction arrangements for new pupils and for those transferring to the next stage of their education. Good links exist with parents and outside agencies, who give wide-ranging help to the school. Vulnerable pupils are well supported by the learning mentor. The school ensures that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully included in school life. Current pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because of good teaching, good support from teaching assistants and newly introduced opportunities to work in small groups. Assessment data is used to monitor progress. However, this information is not always used consistently by staff to improve pupil outcomes and to plan future learning. The academic guidance which pupils receive is satisfactory. However, there are inconsistencies in the quality of marking. It does not always give pupils enough guidance on the next steps they need to take to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides clear direction for the school. She is deeply committed to raising standards and has a clear vision of how to improve the school. Recent initiatives have further improved behaviour. This has allowed a positive and calm climate for learning to develop. The school has a sound understanding of its own strengths and weaknesses. Good use has been made of the school's involvement in a national intervention strategy designed to raise standards. Extensive use has been made of the local authority's consultants and links with the local learning network to train staff, to develop management and to check the school's work. This has also helped to raise expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teaching and learning are regularly monitored in collaboration with the local authority. Useful opportunities have been provided for staff to observe good teaching in other schools.

Areas for improvement identified in the last inspection have been resolutely tackled. The fruits of these efforts can be seen in rising standards and the improved achievement of pupils. The school has worked very hard to raise attendance. The interest of pupils in improving their attendance and punctuality has been captured through the introduction of individual and class certificates and awards. Regular monitoring of improved planning has ensured that teachers make pupils more aware about what they have to learn and that there is a better match of work to pupils' needs, particularly in

Key Stage 2. Consequently, more able pupils are receiving a greater amount of challenging work, although there is scope to develop this further. As a result of these steps the school met most of its targets in 2006.

Recent initiatives have helped to raise standards. An extra teacher has been deployed to enable older pupils to be taught in small ability groups in English and mathematics. This strategy has helped accelerate the progress of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Extra lessons have been introduced for more able pupils and for Year 6 pupils who have fallen behind in their learning. The tracking of pupils' progress has been extended. This is analysed and identified weaknesses in learning are addressed. For example, study of the most recent statutory assessments revealed a weakness in pupils' writing. The school is now focused on improving this. As a result of these innovations, current pupils in Key Stage 2 are now achieving more. Nonetheless, the school recognises the need for further improvement.

Subject managers lead their subjects satisfactorily. They have a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects. Some have begun to monitor planning and the work of pupils. The coordinator for special educational needs provides effective leadership. The Foundation Stage is effectively led by the deputy headteacher. Governance is now satisfactory. Governors have attended appropriate training courses for their role as a critical friend to the school and are holding the school more to account for its work. They are very supportive of the headteacher and are committed to the continued improvement in standards.

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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?	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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
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	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	2
The attendance of learners	4
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	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
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	3
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

Thank you for being so polite and helpful when we inspected your school recently. I am writing to let you know what we found. Some of the best things which we saw were:

- your school has improved since the last inspection and more of you are doing better in your work
- your behaviour is good
- you are polite and helpful to others
- you know how to stay safe and healthy
- you are well cared for and supported by teachers and other adults
- you have a lot of clubs and activities to take part in.

We have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to make some changes in order to make things even better for you at your school. These are:

- to help all of you do better in English
- to make all teaching as good as the best we saw
- to see that your attendance at school improves (you can help with this!)
- to ensure that you get more help about how you can get better at your work.

Once again, many thanks for your help and courtesy when we visited your school.