

St William's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 107330 |
| Local Authority | Bradford |
| Inspection number | 309378 |
| Inspection dates | 24–25 November 2008 |
| Reporting inspector | Ross Parker |

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 231 |
| Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS | 0 |
| Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years | 0 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Fr J Callaghan |
| Headteacher | Mrs M Wright |
| Date of previous school inspection | 24 January 2005 |
| Date of previous funded early education inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Date of previous childcare inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | Young Street Bradford West Yorkshire BD8 9RG |

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| Age group | 3–11 |
| Inspection dates | 24–25 November 2008 |
| Inspection number | 309378 |

Telephone number
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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. Set close to the centre of Bradford, it serves an area with higher than average levels of unemployment and social disadvantage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for a free school meal is above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities has increased sharply recently and is now above average. Around half of the pupils are from a White British background and the number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds has increased steadily in recent years. A high proportion speaks English as an additional language. The school has been awarded the Active Schools Award and the Healthy Schools Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing less well than in all the circumstances it could be reasonably expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils' achievement, particularly in science.

The school has seen a significant change in the range of backgrounds its pupils come from and the range of needs that they bring to the school. Children's skills on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage are well below expectations and a significant number of pupils join the school in later years whilst at the very early stages of learning English. Initially the teaching was not good enough to cope with these changes, so that standards fell sharply and achievement has been inadequate for the last three years. These issues have been addressed over three very challenging years with some success. A substantially changed teaching team now ensures satisfactory progress in lessons for many pupils, apart from in science, where progress remains inadequate. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are making satisfactory progress and some pupils who are new to speaking English are progressing well. There is some very good teaching, but it is not yet consistent throughout the school. Consequently, aspects of planning, marking and target setting vary from class to class. The decline in Key Stage 1 has been halted, though standards remain below average. Standards in Key Stage 2 have been slightly below average over recent years, with low numbers of pupils reaching the higher levels, although provisional results for 2008 indicate that there was some improvement. However, the impact of previously disrupted teaching has adversely affected the current standards reached by the present Year 6. As a result, achievement is inadequate overall.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and take good advantage of the opportunities to be active at play times and in the good range of extra-curricular activities, such as football and street dancing. They feel safe, and understand about the risks they may face outside school. Pupils speak positively about how much they enjoy their time in school, particularly the creative opportunities offered by curriculum. Attendance and punctuality are below average, but behaviour is good and pupils are learning to make an effective contribution to the community. The creative approaches to solving problems and enterprise activities, along with a growing understanding of ecological issues, are preparing pupils adequately for their future economic well-being. However, pupils' below average basic skills are undermining this.

The support for pupils' personal welfare is good. Academic guidance is weaker and the school is working to improve this. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There have been a range of improvements to staffing and to the curriculum and these have supported improved progress recently. There have also been improvements to monitoring and evaluation but these are at an early stage of development. Nevertheless, actions taken are beginning to improve pupils' achievement. The school is strongly inclusive and makes a good contribution to community cohesion. A substantially new governing body gives satisfactory support and appropriate challenge. Their commitment and involvement in the school promise well for the future. All this indicates that there is satisfactory capacity for improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision is good following a period of considerable change. The setting is vibrant, stimulating and well equipped. Teaching is good, due to careful planning, well deployed teaching assistants, good one-to-one interaction with individual children and interesting and challenging activities. Children start in the Nursery with skills that are well below expected levels, especially those at an early stage of learning English. Good teaching ensures that children's overall achievement is good, with particular strengths in their personal development. By the end of the Reception year children work at levels below those expected for their age. Good emphasis is placed on developing children's independence and social skills and behaviour is good. An interesting and varied curriculum provides quality experiences in all the areas of learning. The provision of outdoor play is restricted, though staff manage the limitations satisfactorily. The school now has effective systems to record the progress made by each child, but there is no system to track the choices made by children to ensure they sample all that is on offer.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and improve pupils' achievement, particularly in science.
- Ensure that teachers' planning, marking and target setting are consistent and are effective in increasing the rate of pupils' progress.
- Strengthen actions taken by leaders at all levels in response to their findings from the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and pupils' progress.
- Improve pupils' attendance and punctuality.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Standards by the end of Year 2 have declined over recent years. Writing has been very weak since 2005 and overall standards were exceptionally low in 2007. The decline was halted to some extent in 2008 because the quality of teaching was more consistent, though standards remained below average.

Year 6 test results have been average or just below average over recent years, having declined from exceptionally high standards. Progress was satisfactory until 2005, when it became inadequate in mathematics and science and finally in English in 2007. Provisional test results for 2008 indicate that more pupils reached the higher Level 5 in both English and science than in previous years. However, overall progress was less than expected in all three subjects and pupils' achievement remained inadequate.

The school's data show that progress in English and mathematics has been broadly satisfactory over the last year for the majority of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, but not rapid enough to overcome the long legacy of underachievement. The school does not have data to show that the inadequate progress in science has been reversed and managers do not know why achievement in science is weaker than in English or mathematics. The current Year 6 class has experienced weaker teaching lower down the school and the school's data and the current standard of their work suggest that their results in 2009 will be lower than they should be. Consequently, although improving, standards are too low and achievement is inadequate.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils behave well in lessons and as they move around the school, though some pupils are too reliant on adult guidance. Pupils say they can recall very few incidents of bullying and take a mature attitude to moral and social issues. Pupils really enjoy their time in school. Many take a pride in being part of the school's 'Environment Protection Agency', which helps to make pupils responsible citizens. They have a good understanding of how to keep healthy through good diet and regular exercise. Supported by effective 'circle time' they are able to make reflective and sensible contributions to discussions. There is a real strength in the way in which the school celebrates cultural diversity and contributes to community cohesion. For example, the topic about India draws upon music, dance, art and other religions to give pupils a clear insight into life in another country. Attendance rates have improved but are still lower than they should be, due in part to extended family holidays to home countries. The school has yet to eradicate the persistent lateness of a minority of pupils. The school council is well established and gives pupils a chance to be involved in the running of their school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory and improving. There is some very good teaching which enables pupils to make good progress in particular lessons. Here management is very effective and pupils respond quickly. When given the opportunity, pupils collaborate well and take responsibility for learning within their groups. Interesting and varied activities ensure that pupils concentrate for lengthy periods in order to meet the challenges set. This was observed when Year 6 pupils focused intensely on their presentations to 'The Dragons Den' with imaginative projects, such as, a boot washing machine. Where planning is best, teachers predict where they will prompt individuals to focus on their personal targets. However, not all teachers plan lessons well. Target-setting is inconsistent. In the best examples, pupils have individual targets, which they understand and teachers refer to these repeatedly when they mark their work. In some classes, targets are more general and marking gives praise, but offers less specific personal guidance on how to improve. Teachers' use of tracking data to set targets for individuals is also inconsistent. The improved teaching is ensuring a higher level of learning but has some way to go to close gaps in pupils' previous learning and raise achievement more rapidly across the school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum meets requirements but it is not yet supporting adequate achievement in basic skills and science. Well-planned improvements have ensured that it is creative and innovative and contributes strongly to pupils' enjoyment and improving progress. Consequently, when pupils were asked to identify what they enjoy it was the content of lessons – inventors, the tropical forest, or life in India which prompted the quickest responses. Learning in different subject areas is coherently organised as observed when science, art and music were effectively woven together in a project on the rainforest. There are good links with external partners to provide expertise in sports coaching and specialist challenges for more able and talented pupils.

The school provides a good range of extra-curricular visits and activities and pupils enjoy the sporting activities that are available.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Personal care is good and contributes significantly to the strong inclusive ethos across the school. Statutory requirements for safeguarding children meet requirements and arrangements to ensure health and safety are appropriate. All staff are trained to respond to child protection issues. Personal support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good and day-to-day learning support is satisfactory. Support for pupils who are new to English is also effective in helping them to settle into school quickly. The Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) programme, circle time and the availability of mentoring offer good opportunities for pupils to raise concerns or anxieties. Pupils with behaviour difficulties are carefully managed to give them the best opportunities to re-engage with learning. Teachers examine data about pupils' progress alongside senior managers, but they do not make enough use of this data to inform their planning and assessment. There is no effective tracking data for science.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has successfully steered the school through a period of extreme turbulence and addressed many issues from the previous inspection, but attention has been occasionally deflected away from overall school improvement. Many initiatives have been introduced to arrest the downward trend in standards; most are still at an early stage of development but show some encouraging signs of impact. Leaders and managers have a clear view of what needs to be done to bring about school improvement. However, observations of teaching and learning are not yet robust enough to remove inconsistencies in the way staff tackle aspects, such as marking and target setting. Governors are taking an active part in managing the school and challenging the leaders as 'critical friends.' The senior leaders are developing their effectiveness satisfactorily and demonstrating appropriate capacity to take the school forward.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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? | 4 |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | No |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being? | 2 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 3 |

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

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|---|---|
| How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS? | 2 |
| How well do children in the EYFS achieve? | 2 |
| How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS? | 2 |
| How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop? | 2 |
| How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted? | 2 |
| How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed? | 2 |

Achievement and standards

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|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve? | 4 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 3 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 4 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress | 3 |

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

| | |
|---|---|
| How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 2 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 3 |
| The extent to which learners enjoy their education | 2 |
| The attendance of learners | 4 |
| The behaviour of learners | 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 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 |

Leadership and management

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|--|-----|
| 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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards | 4 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 3 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated | 2 |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion? | 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? | Yes |

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

I am writing on behalf of the inspection team to tell you how very much we enjoyed visiting your school during our recent inspection. Thank you for your warm welcome. You told us how much you enjoy coming to school and how safe and happy you feel there. We enjoyed coming into your lessons and looking at your work.

You told us how much you enjoy the interesting topics that you learn about. You are able to take part in a lot of fun activities outside lessons. We were impressed by the way that you all get on so well together and we think you show a good understanding of how to be healthy. Your school council wants to make a difference and you are all playing your part in trying to improve things for other people. The adults make sure you are well looked after and this is helping you to become confident and considerate.

Now we want you all to turn your attention to improving the standards you reach. We think there are some very important things that your school needs to do better so we have given it a 'Notice to Improve'. This means that inspectors will visit your school again to see how you are getting on.

To help your headteacher and teachers to make the improvements needed, we have asked them to do the following:

- To help you to reach higher standards and to achieve as well as you can, particularly in science, by the time you leave the school.
- To make sure that in every lesson the planned activities, teachers' marking and your own targets help you to improve your work as much as you can.
- To check closely on how well you are learning so that they can see what to do next to help you to reach the next level.
- Make sure that everyone comes to school regularly and on time.

We are confident that your headteacher, your staff and governors can do what is needed for your school to improve. You can help by working hard and coming to school on time every day.