

St Urban's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108027
Local Authority	Leeds
Inspection number	309574
Inspection date	14 December 2007
Reporting inspector	Ross Parker

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	5-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev C Willis
Headteacher	Mrs Elizabeth Cavadino
Date of previous school inspection	19 May 2003
School address	Tongue Lane Leeds West Yorkshire LS6 4QD
Telephone number	0113 2934477
Fax number	0113 2934488

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' achievement; pupils' personal development; and the elements of teaching and learning, the curriculum and care, guidance and support which are most influential in supporting these outcomes. Evidence was gathered from observation of lessons, analysis of pupils' work, discussions with the staff, parents and the chair of governors, as well as the scrutiny of school documents and parent questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in the self-evaluation form, were not justified.

Description of the school

This average sized school is situated in the suburb of Meanwood, on the northern outskirts of the city of Leeds. The school is popular with parents and is frequently oversubscribed. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is average. Around 10% of the pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and around 6% speak English as an additional language, with a few who are at an early stage of learning English. There are fewer pupils identified as having special educational needs than in most schools. The headteacher joined the school shortly before the previous inspection. The school has recently gained a 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: 1

Saint Urban's provides an outstanding education, which focuses primarily on pupils' distinctive personal development while enabling them to reach standards which are among the highest nationally.

Achievement is outstanding. From average starting points in Reception, pupils have reached above average standards in Year 2 in recent years, with some outstanding results. Standards have been more consistently above average in reading than in writing or mathematics, prompting the school to intervene very effectively to narrow the gap. Standards by Year 6 have been consistently above average and exceptionally high in three of the last five years. The school has been particularly successful in enabling a high number of pupils to reach the higher level (Level 5) in the national tests for pupils in this age group. Pupils from different backgrounds and those with additional needs have sustained the same excellent progress as others. The way that individual pupils with significant behaviour difficulties have been able to make excellent progress illustrates the school's inclusive nature.

Pupils are very confident and clearly enjoy school a great deal. This is reflected in their outstanding attendance, though the school continues to strive for even higher levels. Spiritual development is exceptional. Opportunities for pupils to explore the day-to-day implications of the choices they make and the values they hold promote outstanding social and moral awareness. Cultural development is very strong, with a high profile international week supported by extensive attention to different cultures in art, geography, religious education, and by the pupils' sustained charity work.

From the earliest stages, pupils are expected to contribute to school life through undertaking a range of tasks. The demands become more substantial as pupils move up through the years. The school council and buddies are influential and there is an understanding that each pupil carries a responsibility for other pupils' happiness and well-being. Outstanding behaviour is helped by the fact that classes devise their own rules, supported by a consistent reward system. These securely established expectations enable pupils to develop high levels of independence and consideration for others. High levels of basic skills and very well developed collaborative skills provide a superb preparation for future economic well-being. Pupils have lots of opportunities to use information and communications technology (ICT), but the limited number of computers means they can only do this on scheduled days, and then only in small groups. To a limited extent this restricts their appreciation of the day-to-day influence of ICT in the world of work, though a current newspaper project provides good experience of enterprise while raising funds for charity.

Outstanding teaching is based on excellent relationships. Mutual trust and respect facilitates superb classroom management and excellent behaviour, based on well established routines and expectations. Lessons include a strong emphasis on variety and enjoyment and include a high level of challenge. Pupils in Year 3, for instance, are asked to resolve complex moral issues balancing their rights and responsibilities. The quality of marking and feedback is admirable and the tracking of pupils' progress is exemplary. Classroom displays illustrate the invaluable guidance pupils receive both on their academic targets, and the values the school seeks to promote through its weekly ethos focus. Arrangements to ensure pupils' safety are rigorous, and the school provides excellent personal care and support for pupils' self-esteem as they use celebration assemblies to recognise and reward out-of-school achievements, for instance.

One of the most significant improvements since the last inspection, which illustrates the headteacher's excellent vision and direction, has been the transformation of the curriculum to prioritise variety and enrichment. Pupils say that the focus on enjoyment has increased hugely over recent years. Extra-curricular provision is extremely extensive and popular, and superb external links include support for provision in physical education, which is enhanced by visiting experts in practically every discipline. This contributes to pupils' excellent understanding and practice of healthy lifestyles typified by the daily 'wake up and shake up'.

The headteacher and her deputy demonstrate an outstanding commitment to putting people first. Their aim is to develop the whole child rather than prepare children to take external tests. In response, parents are delighted with the welcome the school provides and the excellent progress that children are making. There has been significant improvement to security, ICT resources and playground equipment since the last inspection. In addition, the headteacher has broadened leadership and management roles to ensure a consistent approach right across the school. Thorough self-evaluation is well established and effective in enabling the school to have a largely accurate, if somewhat modest, picture of its strengths and areas for development. There are excellent links with the church and neighbouring schools, as well as an influential parents' forum. Governors are well informed, extensively involved and give good support to the school. The school has an excellent capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Pupils progress quickly in Reception and attain above average levels by the time they enter Year 1. The high quality provision noted in the previous inspection report has been maintained and further developed. Staff are particularly effective in settling children, establishing expectations and creating the security within which they can develop independence and self-confidence. The integration of the Reception class in whole-school activities ensures that they benefit fully from the outstanding ethos. Teaching and assessment are of high quality and the curriculum maintains the strong spiritual emphasis and focus on enjoyment evident throughout the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the range of available ICT equipment so that pupils have the more frequent access that they will experience in future.

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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?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

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

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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 all for the very friendly welcome you gave me when I came to visit your school recently. I really enjoyed meeting you and having the chance to talk to you. The school gives you an outstanding education.

Here are some of the really good things about your school.

You make excellent progress throughout your time at school and are very well prepared for secondary school. I was impressed by your extremely considerate behaviour, concern for other people, and by the calm and friendly atmosphere in the school. You have excellent opportunities to help in school and, through your charity appeals, in the wider world. You understand very well how the right food and the right amount of exercise will keep you healthy, and you really enjoy your learning, particularly the variety of activities that you get in lessons. You also really appreciate the outstanding efforts that the teachers and other adults make to ensure that you are safe and really enjoying yourselves. The teachers give you superb guidance on how to improve your work.

I have asked the school to do something which will make it even better.

You enjoy an outstanding range of activities and experiences in your lessons and extra-curricular activities, and these prepare you really well for later life. The school has improved computer facilities significantly, but there are still too few computers for you to use them in the way that you will as you grow up. The school is now going to improve the number of computers so that the whole class can learn skills together sometimes, and you will be able to use information technology more regularly.

You can help to keep up the outstanding standards by continuing to work hard, and supporting each other and those who are less well off than you are, just as you have done in the past.