

# Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Primary School, Brierfield

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119652
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	313373
<b>Inspection date</b>	11 December 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Eric Jackson

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	102
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Suzanne Barnes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr John Connolly
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 October 2003
<b>School address</b>	Halifax Road Brierfield Nelson Lancashire BB9 5BL
<b>Telephone number</b>	01282 613709
<b>Fax number</b>	01282 690319

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the use of tracking and assessment data to increase progress; the quality of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; and, the effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation. This was achieved by gathering data from scrutiny of school documents, parents' questionnaires and pupils' work, observations and discussions with staff, pupils and governors. 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 its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller than average, heavily oversubscribed Catholic primary school serving a mixed catchment area. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. Almost all the children speak English as their first language, although a small number are bilingual. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average.

## 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 some outstanding features. It has maintained and built upon its strengths since the last inspection which are analysed well in its own self-evaluation. Almost all parents hold it in very high regard, many writing strongly supportive messages on the inspection questionnaires. One summarised the feelings of many in saying, 'It is a happy, caring environment with a friendly ethos and a committed staff devoted to the children and their families'. Inspection evidence confirms these views, finding that pupils' personal development and well-being, including their behaviour, are excellent. Pupils themselves offer such words as 'fantastic', 'exciting', 'superb' and 'fun' when asked to capture the school in one word.

Standards are above average by the end of Year 6, representing good achievement across the school. Pupils who start in Reception and stay until Year 6 usually make very good progress. The recent emphasis on improving writing skills has been effective, especially for boys, and older pupils evaluate their own and other pupils' work to help improve it. The quality of teaching is good and occasionally outstanding. Lessons are well planned to meet the varying needs of mixed-age classes. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported to make good progress. Higher attaining pupils are challenged to stretch themselves and say that their work is often hard to start with but becomes easier because the teaching and help they receive are so good. Teachers mark work thoroughly but sometimes do not write their comments clearly enough for pupils to understand or, in some cases, do not ensure that pupils follow the good guidance given.

The curriculum is good, supporting pupils' personal development outstandingly and their academic progress well. The headteacher and governors set high expectations in all areas of the school's work and are well supported by hard-working and determined staff in helping pupils meet these expectations. Teamwork in the school is strong and the example set for pupils by teachers and support staff is recognised by governors as a key factor in pupils' highly developed social skills. In keeping with the school's mission, the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils learn about their own faith and that of other faith groups through a local 'Building Bridges' project. This also enhances their cultural development very well, helping them to understand the diverse nature of Britain and the wider world. Pupils' learning is further strengthened by visits to museums and other places of educational interest and by the teaching of French by a native speaker of the language.

The school is working towards the local authority's demanding Healthy School status and pupils have a good understanding of how to live healthy lifestyles. They have many opportunities to take part in physical and sporting activities through the local schools' sports partnership. Indeed, the school's links with parents, other local schools and the local authority contribute very effectively to the high quality of education provided.

Pupils say that they really enjoy school and this is obvious in their high attendance and enthusiastic involvement in lessons. They take a full part in extra activities such as sports teams and the choir and are involved in local events and charity fund-raising. The school council has organised the collection of Christmas gift boxes for Romanian children and is proud of innovations such as the 'buddy bench' and the fruit-only tuck shop that they have instigated. They would like to improve the school further by enlarging the playground to give more play space. This is a good idea, as the current small playground restricts active play at lunch and playtime during the many occasions when the expansive grass areas are too wet.

All required safeguarding and child protection procedures are in place. Pupils are safe and secure and the school's care for them is excellent. Many parents wrote about the importance of this care in promoting their children's well-being and progress. One parent said, 'Our child's individual needs are met and her creativity is encouraged immensely'. The deputy headteacher also maintains thorough and accurate monitoring and assessment data about pupils' progress so that academic guidance and support are good. These data are shared regularly with other staff to ensure that pupils make at least expected progress and prompt action is generally taken to help anyone falling behind. Higher attaining pupils are also challenged alongside others to reach the highest levels of which they are capable in all areas of learning, not just in tested subjects.

A real strength of the school is its commitment to equality. Pupils say that irrespective of their ethnicity, religion or background, everyone is fully included in all aspects of the school's work. Pupils who have joined the school in Years 3, 4 or 5 comment that they were welcomed here by other pupils as friends and have since made improved progress in their learning. This is because the staff work closely with pupils and their parents to create a caring and purposeful family atmosphere where all can thrive and work towards their potential. The school prepares pupils very well for the next stage of their lives and is well placed to continue to do so.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children's attainment at entry is broadly average. Provision in the Reception class is well led and managed. This leads to good progress in children's learning so that they reach at least the levels expected by the time they are ready to start in Year 1 and many achieve better than this in early reading and mathematics. This is in part because governors ensure that this class has only one year group of 15 to help them adjust to school life before being part of a mixed age class during the rest of their time in school. The two experienced staff work together as a successful team and parents rightly praise their caring and effective teaching. Children are safe and secure; they enjoy the wide and interesting variety of activities and experiences provided. The strong focus on language and early mathematical skills is well supported by very good personal, social and emotional development. A recent extension to the accommodation has improved the provision significantly. Space and resources are well organised for both adult-led and child-initiated learning.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure marking is effective in helping the pupils improve their work.
- Explore ways to increase pupils' access to all-weather outdoor playing surfaces to give pupils more regularly usable space for fast and vigorous activity.

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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
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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
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?	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?	2

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
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	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**

12 December 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Primary School, Lancashire,  
BB9 5BL

Thank you very much for your kind and friendly welcome when I visited your school recently. You will remember that I came to check how well your school looks after you and helps you to make progress in your learning.

You and your parents told me that Holy Trinity is a really good school. One of your school councillors even said it is 'Fandabidosy'. I also think that your school is good with some outstanding parts. For example, the staff support your parents extremely well to help you to develop into very well behaved, hard-working and enthusiastic learners. You also help by trying to live up to the high expectations your school sets you and achieve well. You clearly enjoy your time at school and this helps the staff to provide you with interesting, challenging but fun activities to stimulate your progress.

You are fortunate in attending such a fine attractive school in such a marvellous setting, with Pendle Hill smiling on you. I know that the staff and school council would like to provide you with more playground space as your current playground is rather small for all of you. Your teachers are also going to let you know more clearly when they mark your work what you can do to improve it. You can help by reading what they write and listening to what they say and then putting it into action.

After hearing about the 'buddy bench', I tried it out. I was soon surrounded by many friends, including a 'buddy' who soon had me joining in a game! This shows how friendly you are and what a welcoming place your school is.

With my best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

Eric Jackson

Lead inspector