

Ormskirk St Anne's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119682
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	313390
Inspection date	27 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Shirley Herring

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	460
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Liz Rafferty
Headteacher	Miss Paula Wilson
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2005
School address	Aughton Street Townend Ormskirk Lancashire L39 3LQ
Telephone number	01695 574697
Fax number	01695 578275

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Introduction

This was a reduced tariff inspection carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the achievement of the more able pupils in reading in Key Stage 1, and in mathematics in Key Stages 1 and 2
- the consistency in the quality of teaching through the school
- the effectiveness of management's actions in bringing about improvements.

Evidence was gathered from; scrutiny of performance data and other school documentation, the work produced by pupils, parents' questionnaires, observations of teaching and learning, and discussions with pupils, staff and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail. The inspector found that all of the judgements made in the school's self-evaluation form were justified and these have been included, where appropriate, in this report.

Description of the school

- This is a larger than average primary school. It serves two parishes in a market town and the surrounding rural area. The social and economic circumstances of the area indicate relative advantage. The vast majority of pupils are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average though the number with a statement of special educational need is above.
- The grant funded nursery, managed by the school, was inspected separately.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. The school is very highly regarded in the area and is oversubscribed. Parents appreciate that their children are treated as individuals, and pupils make exceptional progress academically, socially and emotionally.

Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Children enter the school with skills that, overall, are above what is usual for their age. They make excellent progress during their time in school and reach exceptionally high standards by the time they leave. In the 2007 national tests for seven-year-olds, standards were above average overall and were particularly good in writing. The number of pupils attaining the higher level in mathematics and reading was broadly average. In Key Stage 2, standards in English have been consistently high for several years. Standards in mathematics have improved substantially over the past three years and are now well above average. In the 2007 national tests in Year 6, all the pupils reached the expected level in English and more than half of the pupils exceeded it. Almost all pupils achieved the expected level in mathematics and close to half of the pupils reached a higher level. However, the school is not complacent. Following a rigorous analysis of the school's results, strategies were put in place to improve pupils' problem solving skills. Most recent assessments indicate that this has resulted in a good increase in the proportion of pupils reaching a higher level in mathematics at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils are in line to exceed their challenging targets. The proportion of pupils in Year 2 achieving the higher level in reading remains average and is an area for improvement. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve exceptionally well because their needs are identified at a very early stage and they are supported very effectively.

Pupils' personal development, firmly based on the school's Catholic tradition, is outstanding. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and one parent commented on the very positive messages on cultural diversity given by the school. Pupils are confident, friendly and polite, show excellent attitudes to their work and so achieve very well. They clearly enjoy school because lessons are interesting and varied and there is an extensive range of additional activities on offer. They understand how to keep healthy and feel safe in the secure family atmosphere. They make an excellent contribution to the community through responsibilities in school and involvement in parish activities such as the 'Churches Together' street entertainment. Excellent basic skills and opportunities to work together prepare them very well for the future.

Teaching is consistently good and sometimes outstanding. Lesson planning takes very good account of pupils' previous learning so that work is well matched to their needs and pupils are suitably challenged or supported. Marking is of high quality and helps pupils to improve. Homework is well organised, is linked well to lesson topics and makes a very valuable contribution to pupils' learning. In the best lessons, teachers use their very good subject knowledge to pose pertinent questions to encourage pupils to think and explain. This extends pupils' understanding and so they reach a high standard. The skilled and informed support staff are fully involved in lessons and make an excellent contribution to the learning of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The curriculum is excellent. It is broad and balanced, and activities such as architecture workshops contribute to pupils' enjoyment. Topics such as Africa Day make a very good contribution to pupils' personal development. The strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy skills and their use and application helps pupils to reach a high standard. Provision for

information and communication technology (ICT) is well developed and supports learning in other subjects; for example, pupils in Year 6 created very good animations to support their retelling of Shakespeare's 'The Tempest.' This use of ICT represents a very good improvement since the last inspection.

The school takes very good care of its pupils. All the recommended procedures for safeguarding pupils are in place and rigorously applied. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported very well so they make very good progress. The school has well-established links with other professional agencies and seeks specialist support where needed. The school has developed excellent procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress to identify and remedy potential underachievement at an early stage. Pupils are very clear what they need to do to make progress socially and academically and are keen to do as well as they can.

Leadership and management are excellent. Steered by the very experienced headteacher, and ably supported by a strong management team, the school monitors and evaluates its work thoroughly and accurately and is constantly striving to drive the school forward. This, together with the progress made since the previous inspection, indicates an excellent capacity to improve further. Subject leaders are very effective in monitoring standards and planning improvements; for example, actions to improve mathematics have resulted in improved performance by more able pupils. The forward looking and informed governing body is very involved in the life of the school and supports its work very well.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage (Reception classes) is excellent. One parent commented that the nurturing environment that has been created in Reception helps children develop and share an eagerness to learn. What an excellent foundation for school life!

Children enter the Reception with a range of skills that overall are in advance of what is usual for their age. Consistently good teaching enables children to make very good progress so that almost all children achieve, and many exceed, the recommended early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. There are very good procedures for assessing children's progress and these are used very effectively to identify specific needs from an early stage. Where needed, children receive additional support straight away so they make very good progress.

The exceptional range of good quality children's work on display celebrates their achievements and illustrates a varied curriculum that provides very well for children's needs. A high priority is rightly placed on developing personal and social skills. There is a high expectation for children to take responsibility, for example, registering their name on the computer when they arrive; this helps them to develop independence at an early age. The Foundation Stage is led and managed very well. The strong co-operation between all adults sets a very good example for the children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve achievement in reading for the more able pupils in Key Stage 1.

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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	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?	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	1
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

30 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ormskirk St Anne's Catholic Primary School, Lancashire

L39 3LQ

Thank you for making me so welcome when I inspected your school and for making my day such a pleasure. I particularly enjoyed joining you when you were investigating number patterns in mathematics and I was very impressed by the computer graphics to accompany the retelling of 'The Tempest!'

One of your parents described St Anne's as a 'Brilliant school!', and I agree. I think your school is outstanding, which is the best grade I can give. You play an important part in this by behaving so well, helping each other and working so hard. The excellent teaching and your very good attitudes help you to achieve high standards by the time you leave Year 6.

The headteacher and other adults have been very successful in making sure that you do your best. One thing I have suggested that the school might do to build on such high standards is to help all pupils in Key Stage 1 do as well as they can in reading.

Good luck to you all and may you continue to enjoy learning!

Yours sincerely

Shirley Herring

Lead inspector