

Our Lady and St Edward's Catholic Primary School, Preston

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119579
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	327077
Inspection dates	19–20 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Peter McKay

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	202
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	Father Patrick McMahon
Headteacher	Mrs Emma McGrath
Date of previous school inspection	15 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Lightfoot Lane Fulwood Preston Lancashire PR2 3LP

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	19–20 March 2009
Inspection number	327077

Telephone number
Fax number

01772 862305
01772 862305

Age group	4-11
Inspection dates	19-20 March 2009
Inspection number	327077

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors

Description of the school

This average sized school serves a relatively prosperous suburban area. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or whose first language is not English is below average but increasing. The proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is smaller than normally found, though it varies considerably between year groups. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need is slightly larger than average. The school's Reception class provides for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This good school promotes good academic achievement and outstanding personal development. Both parents and pupils are equally enthusiastic about the quality of education the school provides. 'A wonderful caring atmosphere', 'a well managed and caring school' and 'the teaching staff are extremely dedicated' are typical of parents' views. The school's commitment to inclusion is based on strong Catholic values and the belief that every child really does matter.

Acknowledging the relative uniformity of its own community, the school has sought to become more diverse by drawing pupils from different faith and ethnic backgrounds. Fundraising for a school in Zambia, support for a hostel for the homeless in Preston and shared worship with a Church of England primary school are just a few of the links which support learning and promote good community cohesion.

All groups of pupils achieve well from above average starting points. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 6, standards are well above average. Since the last inspection the school has been successful in raising standards in mathematics, with more pupils exceeding the expected level in national tests. The number of pupils reaching the higher level in English falls below that for mathematics and science. To raise the percentage at level 5 in English the school is starting to improve its approach to guided reading in Key Stage 2. The good achievement and progress is because of good teaching. Teachers make effective use of assessment and plan work carefully to match the needs of individuals. Lessons are interesting and lead to enthusiastic pupils who enjoy learning and work hard.

The curriculum is well balanced because a strong focus on literacy and numeracy is not at the expense of other subjects. Pupils enjoy the numerous visits and visitors which give richness and purpose to learning. Many participate in activities in school and the local community that ensure pupils gain a wide range of educational experiences.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral and social development, are outstanding. Pupils have excellent relationships with adults and each other, showing real respect and care. They say how much they enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their good attendance, their impeccable behaviour and their enthusiasm for their work. They are very well informed about how to lead healthy and safe lifestyles and they make the most of the opportunities provided for healthy eating and exercise. They are generous with their time and effort in contributing to the school and local communities. The quality of the pupils' care, guidance and support is good and ensures that pupils gain effective support both in terms of their academic and personal development.

The school is well led and managed at all levels. All aspects of the school's work are reviewed regularly and thoroughly. Effective action has been taken to bring about improvement, for example in accelerating many pupils' progress in writing and raising standards in mathematics.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children enter the Reception class with a range of skills that overall are slightly above what is typical for their age except in their knowledge of letters and sounds which is less well developed. Most children make good progress and enter Year 1 with many reaching average levels and a good number exceeding this. Progress in the weaker aspect of letters and sounds is especially good because these skills

are taught well enabling children to fill in the gaps in their earlier knowledge. Children also make outstanding strides forward in their personal development which is outstanding. They enjoy coming to school because activities are interesting and fun. Children learn the benefits of a healthy lifestyle as they eat fruit at snack time and enjoy vigorous exercise in the hall and outside. They understand the importance of personal hygiene and routinely wash their hands before eating. This nurturing environment enables children to feel safe in the secure. Behaviour is excellent. Good basic skills and cooperation with others prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

Teachers plan a good range of purposeful and practical activities, both indoors and outside, so children develop well in all areas of learning. There is a good balance between activities led by the teacher and those chosen by the children. Parents play a full part in their children's learning. Many commented how much they valued joining their children in school to see the class museum and also sharing the weekly homework packs, which they say are 'varied and fun'. Teachers use assessment well to plan work to meet the needs of different groups but questioning is not always sufficiently probing to extend the understanding of more able children.

There are well planned systems for introducing children to school through links with their pre-school settings, regular visits to school with their parents and a link with a particular adult in Reception. This helps them to settle quickly and develop a positive attitude to school from an early age. Welfare is good and all the recommended systems for safeguarding children are in place. Staff are vigilant in their care, for example ensuring that children avoid foods to which they are allergic. The Early Years Foundation Stage is effectively led and managed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in reading by consolidating the improvements in provision for guided reading in Key Stage 2 so that more pupils reach Level 5.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are well above average and the achievement of all groups of pupils is good. Standards are higher than they were at the last inspection.

Pupils are set challenging targets and respond positively by maintaining, and in many cases exceeding, the good rate of progress made in the Reception Year. The results of teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 have been consistently above average in all subjects, and well above for the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3.

By the end of Key Stage 2, standards rise further to being well above average overall. Provisional results for 2008 confirm this judgement. Standards in mathematics and science were well above average with a high proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5. In English standards were above average although the school knows that standards in reading could be better because there is scope for more pupils to reach the higher Level 5 in reading. The school's rigorous assessment and tracking system indicates that the great majority of current Year 6 pupils are on course to achieve their challenging targets in 2009. This would result in the maintenance of well above standards in English, mathematics and science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding. All pupils develop very well as personable and confident learners. Pupils really enjoy coming to school, showing enthusiasm and very positive attitudes in all they do. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. Attendance is above average, with a high proportion of pupils achieving a 100% record. Pupils are adamant that they feel safe in school and that they know about staying safe by learning, for example, about road and internet safety. They have a very good understanding of the importance of exercise and sensible eating in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. With very good basic skills, a readiness to work hard and the ability to work very well with others, their preparation for the next stage of their education is outstanding.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good across the school and enable all pupils to make good progress. Very good relationships and positive attitudes create an atmosphere conducive to learning. Teachers have high expectations and pupils are set challenging targets. Accurate assessment gives teachers a good knowledge of pupils' capabilities and most activities are carefully planned to meet their needs. Teaching assistants provide just the right amount of support to those requiring extra help with learning. Teachers' explanations of lesson objectives are clear, if at times a little lengthy, and they use perceptive questions to probe and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. Teachers often use interactive whiteboards to provide visual illustration, but their use is not fully exploited. Pupils work collaboratively in groups. Increasingly they are encouraged to assess their own work to give them a clearer understanding of how well they are doing. Marking makes good use of praise and reward and indicates clearly what has been done well. It is inconsistent in offering helpful guidance on how to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the needs of pupils well. Carefully planned programmes for literacy and numeracy enable pupils to reach consistently high standards in basic skills. At the same time the school has maintained in-depth programmes of work in other subjects, such as geography and design technology, so that pupils gain a good understanding of a wide range of topics. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well by pupils to support their learning in other subjects. The programme for personal, social and health education makes a good contribution to pupils' excellent personal development. There is an extensive range of sporting activities after school which are well attended, though some pupils say they would also like more non-sports based clubs. The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of visitors to school, such as the 'Viking'.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. All the recommended procedures for safeguarding pupils are in place. There are good systems for assessing pupils' progress and so pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified at an early stage. They receive support tailored to their needs so they achieve well. The school also identifies those pupils who are particularly able to ensure they are suitably challenged and this has led to an increase in the number of pupils achieving the higher levels in national tests. Those pupils whose home language is not English are well integrated in class and make good progress. The school has well established systems to track pupils' progress and uses them successfully to identify and address potential underachievement at an early stage. Pupils are kept well informed about how well they are doing in relation to their targets. Adults' respectful attitudes provide a good role model for pupils' personal development. Pupils say that their views are listened to and that there is always someone on hand to help with problems or concerns. The school's systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress keep them well informed about their progress. Target setting is generally good but at times some pupils are not clear about what they have to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management, including governance, are good. Guided by its Catholic tradition, a strong sense of teamwork and a respectful ethos emanating from the headteacher, the school provides good quality care for its pupils. Challenging targets are used successfully to raise standards. Managers at all levels, including subject leaders, monitor and evaluate the school's work thoroughly and accurately and contribute to school improvement. Development plans do not make a sufficiently sharp distinction between those which are priorities, and those which require new actions or initiatives, from those to be developed as part of the school's routine work.

Equal opportunities are promoted effectively so that all achieve well. Informed governors are actively involved in school and provide good support and objective advice. They ensure statutory requirements are met and that resources are used effectively to provide good value for money. The school's contribution to community cohesion is good. Its provision is well planned and the school has ample evidence of its good effectiveness locally and further afield. Its support of less fortunate people in the locality, and also abroad, successfully widens the pupils' understanding of the world around them. There has been a good improvement since the last inspection and the school has a good capacity to improve further.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

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?	1
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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

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?	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
The extent to which 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 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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 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	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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

23 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Our Lady and St Edward's Catholic Primary School, Preston, Lancashire, PR6 0SP

Thank you for being so friendly, helpful and welcoming when we visited your school. We really enjoyed our visit and hearing about how much you enjoy school. Thank you too for the way in which you took time to tell us about the things you enjoy doing at school.

There are many things we like about your school. We agree with you and your parents in thinking that the school is a very friendly and caring community. You work very hard and make good progress in your lessons, which you tell us are very enjoyable. Your behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. We like the way the way you help others both in and out of school, such as supporting the community in Kalomo and the Fox Street hostel. The school works hard to help you become responsible and confident young people and we were very impressed with how keen you are to be involved in so many different activities in and out of school. Your teachers and other adults take good care of you and keep a close eye on your progress to make sure you always do as well as you can.

While you are achieving high standards in all your subjects, we think the school could help more of you to reach the higher Level 5 in English at the end of Key Stage 2. The school agrees with us and will be giving you more support through guided reading.

Thank you once again for being so polite and helpful. I wish every one of you well for the future and hope that you will always work hard and enjoy school.

Yours faithfully

Peter McKay

Lead inspector