

Holy Family Catholic Primary School, Warton

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119590
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	327080
Inspection dates	11–12 February 2009
Reporting inspector	George Crowther

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)	108
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	Mrs Mary Wilson
Headteacher	Mr Austin Manfredi
Date of previous school inspection	27 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Lytham Road Warton Preston Lancashire PR4 1AH

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	11–12 February 2009
Inspection number	327080

Telephone number
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Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This small primary school draws pupils from a wide area due to its religious character. Its social context is no more or less favourable than most schools. An average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Almost all the pupils are from White British backgrounds, with a very small number from minority ethnic backgrounds; very few pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is about average, but is significantly higher in some year groups.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Holy Family is a good school. It capitalises on its strong Christian values to provide a very positive environment for learning where pupils achieve well in both their academic and personal skills. The staff work very hard to ensure that each child is happy, cared for and ready to learn, which is why parents and governors say the school feels like a family. Parents think the school is doing a good job. A typical comment was: 'It's a happy place where each child is valued'. These strengths help pupils to enjoy their education a great deal and to succeed. By Year 6, they are confident, articulate and well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils start school with standards that are typical for their ages and achieve well to reach standards in Year 6 that are usually well above average. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils make good progress. Interesting lessons, motivating teaching, and good support for individual learning needs help pupils to build their skills quickly, particularly in reading and writing. During Years 3 to 6 pupils make good overall progress but, while pupils in Year 5 and 6 are doing very well, current progress in Year 4 is not as rapid because some pupils are not learning quickly enough in lessons. Leaders have identified but not yet fully tackled this weakness. Some outstanding teaching was seen in the Years 5 and 6. Occasionally, however, in other classes pupils' work is not interesting enough and learning is not managed sufficiently tightly to ensure pupils get on quickly enough with their tasks. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are making good progress, particularly those in Year 3, who have received effective, extra support.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and are keen to learn. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils wrote poems about spring for homework and could not wait to share them with adults in school. Pupils are friendly, polite and very well behaved. Relationships are good and pupils of all ages mix together happily. Attendance is well above average. The pupils have a good understanding about being healthy and they feel safe and well cared for. They make a good contribution to the school community, for example through the school council and when Year 6 pupils act as special friends for those in Reception. Pupils' good basic skills and their well developed personal qualities prepare them well for the future. The curriculum is broad and interesting, and pupils particularly enjoy visits out of school, such as when older pupils visited Eyam as part of their work about the great plague. Levels of pastoral care are very good, but not all pupils receive enough support for their academic progress.

Good leadership and management sustain the very positive ethos of the school, which encourages pupils to do well. Following a dip in national test results, leaders have placed a much stronger focus on spotting weaknesses and improving achievement. This puts the school in a good position to improve its work further and ensures that it provides good value for money. Systems to track pupils' progress have also improved. This has been particularly successful for the youngest children and for those with learning difficulties. However, some pupils in Year 4 are still not progressing as fast as they could, because actions to address potential underachievement are not always taken quickly enough. Community cohesion is promoted effectively. The school fosters strong, shared values and is actively equipping pupils to live and thrive alongside people from different backgrounds.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Reception class because the staff get to know them well as individuals and nurture their learning and development carefully. The children enjoy their learning. Welfare requirements are promoted effectively, resulting in a safe and caring environment in which children behave and work well together. Activities are interesting and enjoyable, such as when children developed their understanding of shapes by making robots from a range of found materials, which they then brought to life in their play. Learning is a good balance between independent tasks, such as using construction materials, and activities led by adults, such as learning letter sounds. In all activities, the staff encourage, support and enrich children's learning well, particularly language skills. The outdoor space is too small, lacks a variety of surfaces and has no covered area; this restricts the ways in which the staff can extend children's learning outdoors. Nevertheless, the staff make the best use they can of this area, and there are plans to improve it. Through regular observations, the staff note the progress children are making and make good use of this information to plan what they need to learn next. The school's data and observations of lessons show that children make good progress and, although their standards improve, they are broadly average by the end of the Reception year. Since the previous inspection, good leadership and management have improved provision considerably.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the progress of pupils currently in Year 4.
- Ensure that all classes are given work in lessons that interests and motivates them so that they learn more rapidly.
- Identify weaker aspects of pupils' achievement and tackle them more quickly.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well and standards are well above average by Year 6. They enter Year 1 with broadly average standards and make good progress through Key Stage 1. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. During Years 3 to 6, pupils' progress is uneven but good overall. Year 3 has a large proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and standards are much lower than in other year groups. Considerable extra support is helping these pupils to make good progress. However, Year 4 pupils are not making as rapid progress as other year groups because some of the work is not stimulating their interest sufficiently and they find it hard to concentrate and persevere with tasks. In Years 5 and 6, pupils' achievement is good and many are highly motivated to do well. This is reflected in the current standards in Year 6, which are well above average. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are making good progress because their needs are identified carefully and they receive effective support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils thoroughly enjoy school and, by Year 6, have very positive attitudes to learning. Good behaviour and high levels of attendance support pupils' learning effectively. Relationships are extremely positive with pupils of all ages showing great respect for each other. For example,

Year 6 pupils say their favourite job is playing with the Reception child with whom they are paired. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. A high profile on exploring values, such as the work Year 6 have done about inspirational people, encourages their understanding of themselves and their place in the wider world. Pupils know how to make healthy choices in the food they eat and the exercise they take. They feel safe at school because they say everyone is helpful and they know they can turn to the staff if they have any concerns. Pupils make a good contribution to the school community through a variety of special responsibilities, such as being a member of the school council and discussing ways to make the school even better. The good levels of academic and personal skills seen in Year 6 equip pupils well for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, but it varies from outstanding to satisfactory. In most lessons work is planned carefully to stimulate the pupils' interest and meet their individual needs. Lively whole-class sessions motivate the pupils and encourage them to participate fully. Teachers use a good range of activities, which capture and hold the pupils' attention and make them keen to learn. For example, Year 6 pupils enjoyed exploring the way writers use personification to make their poems interesting. In some lessons, activities are not interesting enough to motivate the pupils, and adults do not ensure that pupils get on with their work quickly enough. On these occasions, pupils do not progress at a fast enough rate. Good relationships and plenty of praise for success are strong features of most lessons. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning, often supporting individuals or a small group. Teachers generally use informal assessment well to keep track of pupils' progress, and whole-school systems also identify pupils who could be doing better. Assessment is used effectively to identify groups of pupils for extra, targeted support.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum provides a wide range of experiences that largely meet pupils' needs and interests well. For example, most classes have more than one age group and in the main, teachers adapt the curriculum successfully to ensure pupils have an appropriate range of work. The curriculum for English and mathematics helps pupils to make good progress across the school. The introduction of new approaches to teaching writing, particularly in Years 5 and 6 is having a positive impact on pupils' skills. Good progress is being made in planning the curriculum more creatively around themes, to develop pupils' basic skills through interesting work in a range of subjects. Pupils' good personal development owes much to a strong programme of personal, social and health education. A wide range of activities outside lessons is much enjoyed by the pupils and helps them to learn new skills. Clubs, educational visits and a residential experience for the oldest pupils enrich the curriculum significantly.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The pastoral care provided for each child is a very strong feature of the school's work. Adults are diligent in ensuring that pupils' emotional and social needs are well met in a secure and

caring environment. They live out the school's Christian values in its day-to-day life and, in doing so, actively promote care and respect amongst all its pupils. The school meets all legal requirements for safeguarding. In lessons, adults generally work effectively to give good support for learning. For example, helpful discussions with individuals about their work were seen frequently during the inspection. Observations and assessments are noted so extra help can be given to particular groups, but support for the progress of pupils in Year 4 has not been timely or rigorous enough to prevent some of them falling behind. Not all teachers make the best use of written feedback to remind pupils about the next steps for learning, though there are examples of highly effective guidance.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management have created and sustained a positive, caring environment in which the pupils enjoy their learning and achieve well. The school community has strong shared values and is actively equipping pupils to live and thrive alongside people from different backgrounds. The headteacher, well supported by the deputy headteacher, sets a clear direction for the development of the school. Self-evaluation is effective. During a time when results of national tests fell, largely due to the characteristics of particular year groups, leaders have taken clear action to boost achievement. For example, extra support for pupils with learning difficulties has resulted in them making good progress. Systems to track pupils' progress are generally helpful in identifying those who may be falling behind, but leaders have not monitored the progress of a challenging Year 4 group carefully enough to enable them to fully tackle the less rapid progress made so far this year. Likewise, though the quality of pupils' learning in lessons is monitored carefully, actions to tackle some weaknesses have not always been taken fast enough. Governors know the school very well, provide considerable support, and have a good grasp of what needs to be done next. Strengths in leadership and management, and recent success in raising achievement, put the school in a good position to improve further.

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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?	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?	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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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/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?	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	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

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**

17 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holy Family Catholic Primary School, Warton, Lancashire,

PR4 1AH

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when I visited your school to find out how well you are doing. Your school is a very happy place where everyone gets on well together.

It is clear you really enjoy school. You say the lessons are interesting and you also like the wide range of other activities. You particularly enjoy trips out of school, such as when you went to the Museum of Lancashire in Preston. You told me about all the jobs you do to help the school run smoothly, such as being a member of school council, and you clearly enjoy these extra responsibilities. You said you feel safe in school because you know the adults will look after you. Your good behaviour and respect for each other were very evident during my visit.

From visiting some of your lessons and looking at your work, it is clear most of you are making good progress. I did find, however, that activities for the pupils in Year 4 are not always helping them to learn as quickly as they could. Most of you are doing well in improving your skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Year 6 have done some interesting work on the Second World War, which has helped them to improve a wide range of skills. You learn well in most lessons because your teachers involve you in lots of interesting activities and encourage you to work hard. You say there are interesting things to do at school, and I agree. The Year 5 and 6 children really enjoyed their trip to Eyam. The staff do a very good job in providing the care and support that helps you to be happy at school. Your headteacher and the staff are keen to make your school even better.

I have asked your school to improve your learning by:

- helping the children currently in Year 4 to learn more quickly
- making sure interesting work in all lessons encourages you to work hard
- finding out where you have weaknesses in your skills and helping you to improve.

Thank you for helping me with the inspection of your school.

Yours faithfully

George Crowther

Lead inspector