

St Ignatius' Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119610
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	327085
Inspection date	17 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Geoffrey Yates

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)	179
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 Jennifer Meehan
Headteacher	Mrs Adrienne Delaney
Date of previous school inspection	1 January 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	St Ignatius' Square Preston Lancashire PR1 1TT
Telephone number	01772 555252
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The Inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- Whether pupils are achieving as well as they can.
- The pupils' ability to use their skills in other subjects.
- The use of assessment information.
- The quality of pupils' personal development.

Evidence was gathered by reviewing the available data on pupils' progress, observing lessons, looking at pupils' work and talking to the school's staff and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not inspected 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

The school is an average size for primary schools nationally. It serves an inner city area. The deprivation levels are well above the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. A well above average number of pupils receive free school meals. The school has a well above average number of pupils who are at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language. The school has won many awards including the Healthy Schools award and Racial Equality award. It has provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Inspection findings confirm the school's judgement that this is a good school which provides good value for money. The exterior of the building is in stark contrast to the warm and inviting interior where pupils' learning is so clearly valued. Pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. This is because of the outstanding quality of pastoral care provided for pupils and the effective way the curriculum promotes pupils' personal development. Pupils come from many different ethnic groups and great care is taken to celebrate religious and cultural festivals. All pupils, including the ever increasing number of pupils who join the school at a very early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language are made to feel special and very welcome. If pupils need additional support, they receive it. For example, a bi-lingual support worker ensures newly arrived Polish pupils get the support they need. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership firmly based on providing what is best for the children. For example, a prayer room is provide for pupils to use which is not just for Catholic pupils but also for pupils from other world religions. Many parents express their high levels of satisfaction with the school and typical parent comments include: 'Our child enjoys school and feels comfortable and confident in the school environment.'

Pupils' skills and knowledge when they enter Year 1 are below what is typical for their age. Pupils make good progress and as a result achieve well. The key reason for this is good teaching which is firmly based on using assessment well to ensure pupils make progress. No stone is left unturned in ensuring pupils make the progress they are capable of. Results in English, mathematics and science, at the end of Key Stage 2 have been broadly average in recent years. Weaknesses though exist in writing where standards are below what is expected. In 2008, the unvalidated test results indicate that pupils again reached the expectations for their age. Improvement is underway in writing and standards are starting to improve.

Pupils are very polite, well mannered and get on well together. They demonstrate a very good degree of mutual support and understanding. For example, one pupil commented, 'If anyone in my class is not sure what to do I will try and help him.' Pupils, say they feel very safe and free from harassment. They have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and of the importance of eating healthy food. In addition to the school council; pupils take on a full range of roles in the school such as acting as playground pals. Pupils' suggestions about how to improve provision within the school are taken seriously by staff. As a result, pupils feel valued and empowered to influence key decisions. Pupils really enjoy school and this is best summed up in the words of one pupil who reported, 'Learning is good here! We all try our best.' Their good learning, along with the school's very strong emphasis on personal development, ensures they are well prepared for the next stage of their education. The school does all it can to promote good attendance. However, parents taking extended holidays abroad to visit their families and the variable attendance of a minority of travellers' children both have an unfavourable impact on attendance. Its level is below average.

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall with some outstanding practice. Pupils are proud of their work and achievements. For example, they are keen to talk about how much they enjoyed the visit made to a local museum. Very good relationships exist between staff and pupils and this means that pupils confidently ask questions and make points in lessons. Occasionally there are missed opportunities when teachers ask questions for pupils to discuss ideas with a partner or in a group. Pupils with learning difficulties benefit from good support in lessons and learn well as do those at an early stage of learning to speak English. Staff have

high expectations of pupils and this is shown most clearly in the marking especially where teachers' comments give clear indications about the quality of work and what the pupil needs to do next. The good curriculum promotes academic development well and pupils benefit from a wide variety of enrichment activities, such as visits, visitors and activities outside lessons. However, opportunities are missed for pupils to use and develop their writing skills in other subjects.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher leads and manages her staff very well. As a result, teachers and support staff work effectively together as a team. Very good use is made of pupil tracking information in ensuring that pupils' receive the right level of support. Governance is good. Governors know the school well and play a full part in its development. The school has maintained its strengths since the last inspection and has a good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children are happy, settled and enjoy coming to school and their parents are overwhelmingly supportive. They enter the EYFS from a variety of settings with skills and knowledge which are below what is typical for the age group. A significant number of pupils are at a very early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language. All children make satisfactory progress but most are not working at the expected levels by the time they are ready to join Year 1. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. A strength of the teaching can be seen in the good progress which children make in their personal, social and emotional development, where their behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. Children are involved in a variety of appropriate indoor and outdoor activities and confidently work and play together. For example, they enjoy playing musical instruments as members of their own 'band' in the outside area. While there is a good range of planned activities they sometimes lack focus and do not always provide enough challenge. For example, pupils are sometimes left too long in taking part in an appropriate writing activity without adult intervention. The EYFS leader was absent during the inspection. Current leadership and management are satisfactory. The teacher and teaching assistants work closely together to ensure that children get off to a secure start.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils' are given regular opportunities to use and develop their writing skills in other subjects in order to help raise standards in writing.
- Ensure that activities in the EYFS are consistently challenging enough.

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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 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?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
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	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?	1

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	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
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

19 October 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of St Ignatius' Catholic Primary School, Lancashire, PR1 1TT

I am writing to you to thank you for your help during my visit to your school and to share with you my opinions about it. I agree with you that your school is a good school. It was lovely to see so many smiling faces. You behave very well and you work hard and try your best in lessons. I enjoyed seeing younger pupils using the outside area. I was impressed with the older pupils' skills in answering questions relating to their visit made to a local museum. It was a pleasure to talk to a group of pupils at lunchtime. They were good ambassadors for your school.

I agree with you that your headteacher and teachers are very caring and give you really good help if you have a problem. All the jobs you do in school and the many activities pupils are involved in are certainly helping you to become good citizens of the future. It is good to see that you know what you need to do to be safe and keep healthy and fit.

I have talked to your staff and agreed that they will make sure you are given more opportunities to use and develop your writing skills not just in literacy lessons but also in other lessons; please will you make a big effort to write as well as you can? We have also agreed that they will make sure that all the activities planned for the youngest pupils challenge them to do their best at all times.

Your school provides all of you with a very caring place to learn. You are given lots of help by teachers and teaching assistants and you therefore feel safe and secure at all times.

I hope you continue to enjoy school and wish you the very best for your future.

Yours sincerely

Geoffrey Yates

Lead inspector