

St Filumena's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 124350 |
| Local Authority | Staffordshire |
| Inspection number | 328114 |
| Inspection dates | 26–27 January 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Brian Holmes |

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) | 177 |
| 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 | James McInerney |
| Headteacher | Michael Wheatley |
| Date of previous school inspection | 1 March 2006 |
| Date of previous funded early education inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Date of previous childcare inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | Caverswall Blythe Bridge Stoke-on-Trent ST11 9EA |

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Age group | 4–11 |
| Inspection dates | 26–27 January 2009 |
| Inspection number | 328114 |

Telephone number
Fax number

01782 392367
01782 392367

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Age group | 4-11 |
| Inspection dates | 26-27 January 2009 |
| Inspection number | 328114 |

© 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

St Filumena's is a smaller than average primary school with an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) covering Reception-aged children. Most of the pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below average, as is the number of learners with difficulties and/or disabilities.

The school is an Eco School and has also been awarded Dyslexia Friendly and Healthy School status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school provides a good quality of education. Some aspects of its work are outstanding and embody the mission statement, 'Love our children for what they are, not just what we wish them to be.' Provision in the EYFS is good. The school enjoys strong levels of support from parents and pupils alike. Parents like the ethos of the school and appreciate the high emphasis it places on pupils' welfare and spiritual, social and moral development. 'The school is one big, happy, extended family,' commented one parent, a view the inspection team agree with.

The outstanding quality of provision for pupils' care, support and guidance makes a major contribution to their outstanding personal development and well-being. The school has excellent links with other schools and local agencies to support pupils' well-being, including the local church. The whole school attends mass every week and this makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual and self-awareness. Pupils' attendance and their behaviour are excellent, as are their attitudes to learning and the levels of care they show for each other. Year 6 pupils, for example, act as buddies to younger pupils and show excellent levels of responsibility in carrying out their duties. Pupils enjoy school immensely and their positive attitudes are reflected in their views of their teachers, who they describe as 'friendly and helpful'. 'My son would go to school at the weekend if he could,' one parent commented. Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of how to live healthily, as seen in their enjoyment of the wide range of sports activities provided and the healthy food choices they make at lunchtime. They show their excellent understanding of how to stay safe in knowing that they can go to any adult in school if they have any worries. They make an outstanding contribution to the life of the school through their work as school councillors and as members of the eco committee. For example, the eco committee organised a whole-school event, a 'Green Day', to raise awareness about the environment. Pupils' economic well-being is good because of their good achievement. They are developing into sensible and responsible young citizens, well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Achievement is good because of the clear direction which the headteacher and the staff set for all pupils to achieve their best. Good self-evaluation and systems for checking the performance of pupils help staff to use the results of assessments accurately to plan future learning and strategies to help pupils improve. Pupils receive good guidance on how to achieve their personal learning targets. The governing body, however, does not sufficiently challenge the school or question the school about the standards pupils achieve and the provision that it is making to improve the quality of pupils' education.

The standards pupils reach across the school are above average by the end of Year 6. Standards in reading, mathematics and science are higher than in writing. Pupils' progress in writing is improving because areas of weakness are being tackled robustly, but it is not as good as pupils' progress in their other areas of learning. The strategies in place have not had enough time to fully impact on pupils' progress. The provision of opportunities to write longer pieces of work is not consistently planned in all subjects. Parents comment that they are happy with the progress that their children are making. The quality of teaching and learning is good and has a positive effect on pupils' achievement. Teachers' planning successfully builds on pupils' prior learning and pupils enjoy a good range of learning activities which motivates them to learn. The good curriculum enhances pupils' achievement, for example, through good provision for personal, social and health education, which supports pupils' personal development, and an outstanding range of additional clubs and activities.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the EYFS is good because of effective leadership and management and a team of committed staff. Children join the school with skills below the levels expected for their age. They make good progress and achieve well, reaching average standards on entry to Year 1. The school has built good links with parents to ensure that children are well supported. Parents are very complimentary about the levels of care provided and the steps the school takes to help their children settle in and get them off to a good start. Links with the wide range of pre-school providers are sound and the school is working hard to improve them further.

Staff place a high priority on children's health, safety and welfare and on developing their independence, and this results in good personal development. A stimulating range of activities encourages good attitudes to learning and meets the needs of all children. Planning for child-led activities does not always indicate clearly what the focus for learning is. Children enjoy their time in class and become increasingly confident in expressing themselves. They play and cooperate well, for example, when investigating the bear's cave in the role-play area. Good use is made of the outdoor area, which adds to children's enjoyment of learning and stimulates their imagination. For example, when they re-enacted the story of *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*, they successfully developed their spoken language and communicated their ideas and thoughts well. Children's profiles give clear and regular information about their learning, which is used well to plan further activities.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards of attainment in writing so they are in line with those in reading and mathematics by embedding the strategies being used in literacy lessons and by giving pupils more opportunities to use the writing skills they develop in literacy to produce longer pieces of writing in all subjects.
- Ensure that the governing body challenges and questions senior managers more about standards and the quality of provision the school provides.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement in the EYFS and in Years 1 to 6 is good and, by the end of Year 6, pupils reach standards of attainment that are above average in reading, mathematics and science, and average in writing. The school has worked hard to improve pupils' progress in writing recently and is aware of the gap in standards between writing and other aspects of pupils' learning. Progress in writing is consistent across all year groups but some of the good strategies in literacy lessons have not had enough time to impact fully on pupils' achievement. Important factors in improving achievement have been the improved use of assessment to check pupils' performance, which has had a positive effect particularly on progress in mathematics, and the sharing of targets with pupils so they know what is expected of them. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are progressing and achieving well because of the good levels of support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Their social and moral development is seen in the excellent contribution they make to the life of the school through the many opportunities they are given to take responsibility and express their views. Pupils have a good cultural understanding through their links with the wider community and the wide range of activities and events they experience in school. Year 6 pupils act as reading buddies to pupils in Year 3, for example. The school council has helped to introduce a 'student of the week' award and established a sensory garden in the school grounds. Pupils' enjoyment of school is seen in their enthusiasm in lessons and their support for each other. 'You can make lots of friends at this school and everyone looks after each other,' was how one pupil explained why they enjoy school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers enjoy good relationships with their pupils and manage them well. They plan effectively to meet the wide range of abilities in each class, although occasionally more able pupils complete tasks quickly because they find them easy. Teachers use a good variety of practical approaches and resources to stimulate pupils and make their learning interesting. Pupils say that their teachers 'make learning fun'. They work well together with others in small groups on independent activities and share resources well. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to enable pupils to express their ideas by talking to other pupils. Thorough marking makes clear to pupils what they need to do next to improve their work. Teaching assistants are deployed well and provide good levels of support for pupils' learning and personal development and well-being.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets the pupils' needs well. Opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills in other subjects to produce longer pieces of writing are satisfactory, with some good practice seen in pupils' religious education books. An extensive programme for personal, social and health education supports pupils' outstanding personal development extremely well. Pupils say that they can 'go to lots of clubs' and they have access to a wide range of activities, which are well attended. There is very good provision for sport and an outstanding range of enrichment activities linked to several subjects, for example a 'Victorian Day' in history and a 'French Day' as part of the introduction of a modern foreign language. These experiences enhance pupils' education extremely well. The school also makes very good use of visits and visitors, for example, a visit to the local university by pupils in Key Stage 2 to design and build rockets.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

All adults in the school place the highest possible emphasis on the health, safety and welfare of the pupils. Procedures for safeguarding and the welfare of pupils meet requirements. Parents comment on the 'very caring, disciplined environment', which results in their children being very happy at school. 'My daughter, and many others, run up the school drive every day,'

commented one parent. The pupils themselves say that they are very happy at school and know that there is always an adult to go to if they have a problem. Pupils appreciate the Breakfast Club and the Buddy System, which they know is there to keep them safe. There are outstanding links with outside agencies to support pupils' well-being, for example, excellent links with the local high school ensure a smooth transition for pupils to the next stage of their education. Academic guidance is good. Pupils know their targets and are aware of what they need to do to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and staff have a clear vision for the school to 'develop the whole child'. They work hard together to continue improving the achievement of pupils and to maintain high standards of personal development and well-being. This common purpose among the staff indicates that the school has a good capacity to improve further, as seen in improved progress by pupils in mathematics. Self-evaluation is effective, with good systems for checking provision and improving the performance of pupils. Subject leaders have a clear role to improve achievement and the effects of their good work can be seen in the standards pupils reach in reading and mathematics. Governors are extremely supportive of the school but their role in checking its performance to improve standards of attainment and the quality of provision is underdeveloped. The school makes a good contribution to the promotion of community cohesion. Strong links with the local community contribute positively to pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being. They improve their understanding of the wider community by working with people from different backgrounds. Parents' views of the school are very positive but a small minority expressed the view that they would like to receive more information about their children's progress.

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? | 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? | 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? | 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 | 1 |
| 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 | 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 | 3 |
| 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**

28 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Filumena's Catholic Primary School, Staffordshire ST11 9EA

Thank you for being so welcoming and helpful when we visited your school. We thought you were extremely polite and helpful. We enjoyed talking to you and listening to what you had to say. We know that you are extremely proud of your school and really enjoy your time there. We think that St Filumena's is a good school with a number of strengths. These are the main things we found out about your school.

- You make good progress in your work and reach standards above those expected of you. You do better in reading and mathematics than in writing.
- Your behaviour and attendance are excellent and you show extremely positive attitudes to your learning.
- You have an excellent understanding of how live healthily and how to stay safe.
- The wide range of activities that the school provides for you helps you to achieve well.
- You make an excellent contribution to the life of the school through the Eco committee and the Buddy system.
- You are taught well and say that your teachers 'are helpful and do lots of different things for you'.
- You know your targets and how to improve your work.
- The adults in school look after you extremely well and they all work hard to help you do your best.

In order to make the school better, we have asked the staff to:

- help you to achieve as well in writing as you do in your reading and mathematics by giving you more opportunities to use your writing skills in all your subjects to write longer pieces of work
- make sure that governors do more to check on what the school is doing to improve your education.

You can help by continuing to work hard and behaving well.

Best Wishes

Brian Holmes

Lead inspector