

Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104935
Local Authority	Sefton
Inspection number	331410
Inspection dates	2–3 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Michael McIlroy HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	117
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Father F W Simpson
Headteacher	Mrs J Travers
Date of previous school inspection	February 2006
School address	Ford Close Litherland Liverpool Merseyside L21 0EP
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The inspector visited eight lessons and held meetings with staff, a group of pupils and the chair of the governing body. The inspector observed the school's work, looked at the school's self-evaluation, policies and assessment information, pupils' books, 36 parental questionnaires and 15 staff questionnaires.

The inspection reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- The school's work in writing and science.
- Pupils' attainment at Key Stage 2.

Information about the school

The number of pupils at the school is smaller than at the time of the last inspection. It serves a disadvantaged area and the proportion of pupils who join and leave the school during the school year is higher than average. The school has an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) unit.

Further information about the school

	School's figures	School's figures compared with other schools
School size	117	Well below average
Free school meals	34%	Well above average
Proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	25%	Above average
Proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups	2%	Well below average
Proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language	0	Well below average
Proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	0	Well below average

Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

3

Capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school with good features. Its chief strengths lie in the pupils' outstanding attitudes to leading healthy lifestyles and the good care, support and guidance the school provides. The school's pastoral care is highly valued by parents and enables new pupils to settle quickly. Pupils receive a good start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and in Key Stage 1. This momentum is not sustained in Key Stage 2, although the pupils make satisfactory progress overall and their attainment when they leave is broadly average. Teaching is satisfactory overall, partly because work in lessons does not always sufficiently challenge the more able. Standards in writing are weaker than in other core areas. The school's systems for checking on the pupils' progress are satisfactory, but pupils sometimes lack information about how to improve their work.

The school can point to a number of improvements to demonstrate its satisfactory capacity for further improvement. Attainment at Key Stage 1 and pupils' attendance have risen as a result of the school's efforts and links with parents have improved. The school's self-evaluation has identified suitable priorities, for example, raising standards at Key Stage 2, but a lack of attention to ensuring that initiatives are monitored rigorously has diluted their impact. Challenging targets are based on a generally accurate analysis of pupils' performance and last year these were adequately met. The school remains determined to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, so that all is consistently good by:
 - ensuring that the pace of all lessons is good
 - ensuring that more able pupils are appropriately challenged.
- Raise attainment in writing, particularly in Key Stage 2, by:
 - ensuring pupils have good opportunities for extended writing across a range of subjects
 - providing experience of a wide range of different genres
 - providing opportunities that will challenge the more able.

- Improve the academic guidance that pupils receive by:
 - ensuring that older pupils know clearly the National Curriculum levels they are working at and their targets
 - ensuring that marking identifies more clearly for pupils the next steps they must take in order to improve their work.

How well does the school meet the needs of individuals and different groups of pupils?

3

Achievement is satisfactory overall. Pupils enter the school with skills and abilities that are below, and sometimes well below, what is expected for their age group. They make good progress in their learning in the EYFS and in Key Stage 1 where pupils' attainment has risen steadily and is now average. However, their progress is not as fast in Key Stage 2 and when pupils finish Year 6 their attainment remains broadly average. This is due to weaknesses in writing and some discontinuity in staffing. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported throughout their time in school and consequently make good progress and often attain better than their national counterparts.

Pupils are well behaved in and around school. They are courteous and helpful and relationships with staff and with each other are strengths of the school. These, and pupils' good spiritual, social and moral development reflect the school's strong Catholic and inclusive ethos. Pupils have an outstanding awareness of how to lead a healthy lifestyle, exemplified by the growing numbers who choose to eat healthily at lunchtimes and the high participation in extra-curricular clubs. Pupils feel safe at school and are adamant that bullying is rare and that any misbehaviour is dealt with swiftly. They make a good contribution to both the school and the local community.

Pupils' punctuality is good. Due to the hard work of the school, attendance has improved but remains below average. Pupils' are developing satisfactorily the skills they will need for future employment and team working skills are good.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	2
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	2
How well do pupils behave?	2

¹ Grades for attainment are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; 4 is low

To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	1
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	2
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3
Pupils' attendance and punctuality	3
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	2

The quality of the school's work

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, although there is a proportion that is good. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported in lessons and by specific programmes of work. Where teaching is good, expectations are high, questions are well used to assess pupils' progress, pertinent feedback is given and activities meet the needs of those of differing abilities. Where it is satisfactory, the pace is not fast enough, planning and work do not take enough account of pupils' different abilities and activities do not fully challenge the more able.

The school's assessment and tracking systems are satisfactory, but some are in the early stages of development. Pupils' work is marked, but comments are too often of a congratulatory nature rather than identifying effectively for pupils what the next steps are that they must take to improve. Not all older pupils know their targets or the National Curriculum levels at which they are working.

The curriculum is satisfactory with some good elements, for example, the good range of extra-curricular activities and the recent 'Alien day' designed to promote writing skills. The support, care and pastoral guidance that pupils receive is good and is key to enabling new pupils to settle quickly into school life. There are good arrangements for meeting the pastoral needs of vulnerable pupils.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

High quality teaching and purposeful learning	3
Effective assessment and academic guidance	3
An appropriate curriculum which meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, provision through partnership with other organisations	3
Support, guidance and care	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The school places a strong emphasis on inclusion and care for pupils, thus enabling new and vulnerable pupils to settle quickly into the school community. This also fosters the good progress made by those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Since the last inspection there

have been a number of improvements, for example, in attendance, in raising standards at Key Stage 1 and in strengthening links with parents. There have been some improvements in teaching, although these have not yet had a sustained impact on standards at the end of Key Stage 2. A number of initiatives have been launched to raise standards, for example, providing more teaching time for science and visits to science museums. However, some initiatives, designed to raise standards in literacy, have not been systematically monitored and followed through. Governance is satisfactory and the governing body is developing in its role as a critical friend to the school.

Links with parents and carers are good. These have been strengthened, partly through information sessions for parents on reading and numeracy. Parental views are sampled through questionnaires and improvements made such as changing homework arrangements for younger learners. Partnerships with other organisations, for example, one that teaches cycling safety, are also good. Close links with the local authority's education welfare service have helped improve attendance and use is also made of a range of educational consultants. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion, partly through its developing links with other local schools. Safeguarding procedures are good, contributing to the confidence that pupils and parents have in the quality of the school's care.

These are the grades for leadership and management

Monitoring, evaluating and planning for improvement to outcomes for pupils	3
Promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination	2
Ensuring that safeguarding procedures are effective	2
Ensuring that the governing body provides effective challenge and support so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities are met	3
Promoting the school's relationship with parents and carers, including their involvement in decision-making about matters relating to learning and well-being	2
Developing partnerships with other providers, organisations and services	2
Ensuring the school contributes to community cohesion	3
Deploying resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children receive a good start to their school career in the effectively led EYFS. Good induction arrangements enable them to settle quickly into school life and those of Nursery age play and learn well together with older children. Most children enter the school with skills and abilities that are below those expected for their age and some are well below. Good teaching, including a strong emphasis on language development, enables children to make good progress in their learning so that by the end of the EYFS most are working within the early learning goals expected for their age group. A strong focus is also placed on developing children' social and working attitudes, which is reflected in their good behaviour and enthusiasm for learning. Children with learning difficulties and/or learning difficulties are identified early, are

well cared for and fully involved in learning activities.

Learning activities are varied and thoughtfully and cooperatively planned. They build successfully on first hand experiences. For example, the knowledge children had gained from a farm visit was followed up well in a story session that required them to answer questions about the animals they had seen. The accommodation for EYFS is imaginatively and purposefully decorated and well-resourced. Resources, including the covered outdoor area, are effectively used to extend learning and children's independence. For example, children can choose programs for the interactive whiteboard and manipulate them on the screen. Children's development is monitored carefully and recorded regularly by the EYFS team. This enables good tracking of their progress, which informs the good transfer arrangements when children move on to the next stage of their schooling.

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 the children in the EYFS promoted?*	2
How effectively is the provision in the EYFS led and managed?*	2

* Common judgements made across all inspections of the EYFS

Views of parents and carers

Parents who returned questionnaires and those who spoke to the inspector during the inspection are overwhelmingly supportive of the school's work. They strongly appreciate the level of care and support it provides, including that for vulnerable pupils. They also value recent improvements in the school and the quick responses of staff to any concerns they may have. They feel well informed about school developments. A few would like more homework to be sent home for older pupils and some are unclear about how the school takes account of their views. Inspection evidence shows that the school samples parents' views through questionnaires and considers the results of these carefully.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2006-7, 14% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2006-7, 46% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing for its pupils suitably. In 2006-7, 34% of schools were judged satisfactory.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2006-7, 6% of schools were judged inadequate.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Achievement:	an overall measure of the pupils' success in their academic learning. The term combines attainment and progress. Pupils might make good progress, for example, but if their attainment remains low, inspectors may judge that their achievement is only satisfactory.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.



4 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Primary School

Thank you for being so polite and helpful when I inspected your school recently. I am writing to let you know what I found.

- ☺ Your school is a satisfactory school with a number of good features.
- ☺ You have a very good understanding of how to lead healthy lives, shown by the fact that more of you are choosing to eat healthily at lunchtimes.
- ☺ Your behaviour is good.
- ☺ You receive a good start to your education in the Foundation Stage.
- ☺ You are well cared for and supported by your teachers and other staff.
- ☺ You make a good contribution to the school and local community.

I have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to make some improvements by:

- helping you, especially those of you in Key Stage 2, to achieve more in writing
- making all teaching as good as the best that I saw
- making sure that you know how well you are doing in your work and are clear about the next steps you need to take in order to improve.

Once again, many thanks for being so helpful and friendly when I visited your school.

Yours sincerely

Michael McIlroy
Her Majesty's Inspector

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