

Penwortham, St Teresa's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119699
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	339506
Inspection dates	2–3 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Colin Smith

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	253
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Brenda Holt
Headteacher	Mrs Anne Bleasdale
Date of previous school inspection	2 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at pupils' books, school assessments, improvement plans and reports and analysed parents' and carers' and pupils' questionnaires.

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

- learning and progress, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, and in writing in Key Stage 2
- the extent to which teachers use assessment information to set targets and provide challenging activities for all groups of pupils
- the effectiveness of leadership and management in establishing accurate self-evaluation as a basis for improvement.

Information about the school

The school is larger than average in size. The proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals and with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well below average. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Only a very small number speak English as an additional language. Early Years Foundation Stage provision comprises a Reception class. The school has endured a prolonged period of staff absences. The headteacher was appointed two years ago. The school has gained Healthy Schools and Activemark awards.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

St Teresa's is a good school that has improved significantly since its previous inspection. The school's good capacity for improvement is attributable to the headteacher's vision and tenacity in uniting staff towards common goals and accurate self-evaluation. Children's attainment on entering school is above that expected for their age. Good, and sometimes outstanding, teaching propels them forward, enabling them to make good progress in most classes. Consequently, standards are rising and are well above average by the end of Year 6. The school's good care, guidance and support make a vital contribution to pupils' excellent understanding of safe and healthy lifestyles, their exemplary contribution to the school and wider community and their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The school's good curriculum stimulates pupils' interest in learning, promotes their enjoyment of school and plays a part in their excellent attendance. Pupils appreciate all that the school provides, as do the very large majority of parents and carers, although some parents have reservations about staff absences and want more information about their children's progress. School leaders are addressing these issues purposefully.

Strong leadership has improved progress and standards in Key Stage 2 but staff absences have left the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 without such clear direction. Although children make a satisfactory start in Reception, the importance of learning through play is not sufficiently emphasised. Pupils make satisfactory, rather than good, progress in the early stages of Key Stage 1, where there are still some inconsistencies in teaching. Teachers with key responsibilities have gained skills from the headteacher's leadership, just as governors have benefited from a better flow of information. However, some school leaders and governors do not play a full part in checking and improving the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - providing more purposeful activities so children can learn through play
 - ensuring better adult intervention to extend children's learning further
 - making more effective use of assessment in planning the next steps.
- Increase pupils' progress in lower Key Stage 1 by:
 - ensuring good management and pace in all lessons to keep pupils fully engaged in learning

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- raising the challenge for more-able pupils.
- Improve monitoring and evaluation by:
 - increasing the contribution made by teachers with responsibility in checking pupils' learning and improving their progress
 - involving governors fully in the process.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Most pupils are highly motivated. In almost all lessons, they listen attentively and answer questions enthusiastically. During group activities, they work with good application, even without direct supervision. These factors play an important part in pupils' good progress, particularly in reading, mathematics and science, enabling them to reach high standards by the end of Key Stage 2. Progress in writing has been satisfactory over recent years and standards are above average rather than high. Leaders and teachers have responded positively, providing pupils with clear targets for improvement and making writing more meaningful and enjoyable, for example, through the use of drama. As a result, progress in writing is accelerating. Pupils are becoming enthusiastic writers, eager to use powerful language that engages the reader's attention. For example, Year 6 pupils were fascinated by personification and Year 2 pupils became absorbed in writing reports in the third person.

Although standards have remained above average in Key Stage 1, progress has been only satisfactory, given pupils' starting points. Learning in this part of the school is more variable, ranging from satisfactory to outstanding and the learning and progress of more-able pupils is sometimes held back when they are not challenged sufficiently. This is why some of the Year 2 pupils do not reach the levels of which they are capable.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are achieving well in all parts of the school. They receive good support which raises their confidence and helps almost all of them to reach the levels expected by the end of Year 6.

The school's caring atmosphere and attention to pupils' well-being, allied with strong parental support, ensures that pupils acquire an excellent awareness of the importance of leading safe and healthy lifestyles. They have extensive responsibilities and an increasingly strong voice in what happens in school. They relish opportunities to make decisions and look after others, for example, as school councillors and playground buddies. Pupils develop good literacy and numeracy skills, social maturity, competency in information and communication technology (ICT) and attendance levels are very high. These factors prepare them extremely well for the future. The school's Christian atmosphere contributes to the pupils' good behaviour and excellent spiritual, moral and social awareness. Pupils gain exceptionally clear insights into other religions and learn to appreciate cultural diversity.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is mainly good, sometimes outstanding and sometimes satisfactory. In almost all classes, relationships are first-class and pupils give of their best. Teachers ensure that pupils know exactly what they are expected to learn. Lessons usually have good pace, new skills are taught effectively and teachers ensure that pupils have time to practise, improve and apply them. Teachers use a good range of methods, including drama and games, to engage pupils' interest, although the use of ICT in class lessons is limited. The use of assessment information is good overall and the tasks provided are usually well matched to pupils' different learning needs. Where teaching is outstanding, teachers use assessment data astutely within the lesson to probe pupils' understanding and adjust their teaching accordingly. Such lessons inspire pupils, for example, to read poetry expressively and write with flourish and imagination. Where teaching is satisfactory, the challenge for more-able pupils is not always sufficient to move their learning on or a slower pace and weaker management of the lesson results in pupils becoming distracted, which occasionally hamper pupils' learning.

The school has revitalised the curriculum without losing its focus on literacy and numeracy. During topic studies, pupils make choices, develop their creative talents and engage in research, which increases their motivation to learn. The curriculum is rich in additional activities such as French and sport, with visitors who share their experiences and provide good personal, social and health education. These activities make a

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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valuable contribution to pupils' welfare, interests and enjoyment of school.

Pastoral care is particularly good. Pupils feel safe and develop trusting relationships with adults. Vulnerable pupils are well catered for. Effective partnerships between school staff and health and education professionals have been established. The school has been resourceful in recruiting and training additional staff. These factors help pupils to overcome barriers to learning. School induction and transfer arrangements are well established to ensure that pupils settle into school quickly, move through the school smoothly and transfer to secondary school successfully.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Despite staff absences, the headteacher and assistant headteacher have remedied the underachievement identified in the previous inspection, improved provision and driven up standards in Key Stage 2. Plans are in place to extend this strong leadership to Key Stage 1 and the Early Years Foundation Stage, to ensure greater consistency in teaching and learning. The headteacher has analysed assessments rigorously, checked pupils' progress and targeted groups of pupils in danger of slipping back; hence closing any attainment gaps. This, along with a commitment to inclusion and challenging stereotyping, ensures that equality is strongly promoted. The headteacher has observed many lessons, examined pupils' work and provided staff training to remedy any weaknesses. This is why teaching has improved.

Senior staff and subject leaders' roles are now being established. Strong leadership in mathematics has seen a sharp rise in standards. The same approach is now being applied to writing and improvement is evident. A unified team has been built and governors have provided good support in carrying out their statutory duties. However, the headteacher has carried a heavy workload in checking provision and improving outcomes with too few other leaders and governors taking a share in these tasks. Safeguarding is satisfactory, including the safe recruitment of staff and health and safety procedures are secure. Good partnerships with parents and outside agencies add value, for example, through homework and developing pupils' ICT skills with the secondary school. Community cohesion is promoted well, not least by involving pupils in deciding how the school can reach out and involve the wider community in the life of the school.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Many children enter school with knowledge and skills above that typically expected for their age. By the end of Reception, their attainment is above average, which represents satisfactory progress. Reading and basic number skills are priorities and in these areas progress is often good. Good induction procedures help children to settle quickly, enjoy learning and usually behave well. Their welfare is strongly promoted. Consequently, children develop a secure understanding of healthy lifestyles, keeping safe and personal hygiene. Provision and teaching are satisfactory. An adequate range of activities is provided, indoors and outside. Children sometimes become absorbed in learning, for example, when making puppets. There is a good balance of activities led by adults, such as teaching children to write messages on Christmas cards, and activities chosen by the children themselves, such as construction and role-play. However, children's free play sometimes lacks stimulus or purpose, particularly when adults do not intervene to extend their learning. A positive start has been made with observing and assessing children's learning to provide a picture of their development. However, the information is not used sufficiently well in planning the next steps in their learning. Satisfactory leadership and management have led to some improvements, for example, in the deployment of teaching assistants and the quality of outdoor provision. However, monitoring and evaluation of the work of the Early Years Foundation Stage is limited in identifying areas where the provision requires adjustment to enable children to learn more quickly. Welfare requirements are fully met.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers believe that teaching and leadership are good and behaviour is well managed. They feel their children are safe, enjoy school and are being well prepared for the future. Many parents and carers feel the school takes account of their suggestions and meets their children's needs appropriately, helping them to make sufficient progress. Inspectors endorse parents' and carers' positive views. Approximately 20% of parents and carers have concerns, involving past staff absences when their children's education suffered, particularly those requiring additional support. The team's investigations indicate that staff stability is close to being achieved with the appointment of a new deputy headteacher in January 2010. In lessons, pupils' books and records, there is compelling evidence that pupils' learning needs are being met, including those with special educational needs' and/or disabilities. Almost a third of parent and carer respondents feel insufficiently informed about their children's progress, however, the school has ambitious plans to increase the flow of information. Homework diaries have been established. Reports on the levels reached by children are prepared and record cards are scheduled for release in 2010. Leadership has been stretched to cover staff absences and there has been insufficient leadership of the infant and Reception classes, which is where children's progress is satisfactory rather than good. This is why the inspection team has cited these areas as issues for improvement.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Penwortham, St Teresa's Catholic Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 90 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 253 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	38	42	46	51	4	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	45	50	43	48	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	20	22	40	44	25	28	4	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	26	40	44	14	16	5	6
The teaching is good at this school	27	30	41	46	14	16	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	19	50	56	16	18	3	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	30	51	57	9	10	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	24	27	41	46	10	11	5	6
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	27	44	49	14	16	5	6
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	22	49	54	9	10	7	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	22	42	47	18	20	5	6
The school is led and managed effectively	23	26	47	52	7	8	4	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	25	28	47	52	11	12	4	4

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
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.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



4 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Penwortham, St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Preston, PR1 0JH

Thank you for making the inspection team so welcome and answering our questions so politely. Seeing you dressed in wartime clothes for 'VE day' made me feel quite at home! St Teresa's is a good school and you are right to be proud of it. You put your finger exactly on why the school has improved; the good leadership and management by your headteacher. Teaching is good and the curriculum is now more interesting. This helps you to enjoy learning and make good progress. The standards you reach by the end of Year 6 are well above average, and rising.

Your school is very caring and you are well looked after. You repay your teachers by behaving well. Those of you who need extra help are well supported and teachers have provided targets for you to aim for so that you can take more responsibility for your own learning. This helps you now, but it will help you even more in later life.

Your knowledge and understanding of safe and healthy lifestyles are excellent, so are your attendance and the way you carry out your special jobs and responsibilities. Teachers and your parents and carers deserve credit for supporting you so well in these areas.

Your headteacher has had only two years to change the school. It has not been easy because of absences of teachers. The good leadership by your assistant headteacher has made a real difference in the junior classes.

I have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to:

- help Reception children to make a quicker start as independent learners so they can make the best progress possible
- make sure that more-able pupils are always challenged to help raise standards further in the infant classes
- involve more staff in checking that these things are happening to help your school to aim for excellence.

You can help by always trying your very best and working really hard.

Yours sincerely

Mr Colin Smith

Lead inspector

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