

# St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School, Burnley

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119703
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	339510
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 January 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Geoffrey Yates

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	323
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Andrew Hutchison
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Ian Jones
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 October 2006
<b>School address</b>	Holcombe Drive Burnley Lancashire BB10 4BH
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons, observed 11 teachers and spent 70% of the inspection time looking at learning across the school. They also held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents. They observed the school's work, and looked at many documents including the school's improvement plan, pupils' books, the school's safeguarding files and 77 parental questionnaires.

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

- whether all groups of pupils were making at least satisfactory progress, especially in Years 1 and 2
- how good provision is in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- how well the teachers make use of assessment information regarding pupils' progress in planning their lessons.

## Information about the school

The school is larger than average. It draws its pupils from a residential area of Burnley. It is housed in three different buildings. A very large majority of pupils are White British, the remainder representing a range of other heritages. No pupils are at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils who receive a free school meal is above average as is the percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is provided in separate Nursery and Reception classes.

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

Saint Mary's Primary School provides a satisfactory standard of education. It has a number of good features which include:

- an environment where pupils receive effective personal care and support, including that for the most vulnerable
- the good start that children get in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- pupils' good behaviour and attitudes
- the good provision for pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development
- pupils' good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle and how to stay safe
- very good parental support
- the good opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of the local and wider communities and to take on responsibility.

Pupils' attain average standards and their achievement is satisfactory overall. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with the skills below those expected for their age. By the time they enter Year 1, they are working at average levels. Throughout the rest of the school progress is satisfactory overall. By the time pupils leave Year 6, standards are average in English, mathematics and science.

Teaching is satisfactory overall, but there are examples of good teaching. In good lessons, pupils are fully involved in learning and make good progress by being challenged to use their skills well. In lessons where teaching is not as strong, teachers do not use questions well, which means that pupils are less sure about what they should learn and the more-able pupils are given work that lacks sufficient challenge. This slows the pace of learning.

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum and a wide range of interesting extra-curricular activities for pupils. These contribute to their considerable enjoyment of school which is shown by their good attendance. The school has recently improved the way in which it collects information about pupils' progress and this information is used increasingly well in most classes.

While leadership and management are satisfactory overall, the roles of subject leaders are under-developed, which limits their impact on school improvement. Currently, there are no checks made by subject leaders to help to improve the quality of teaching to consistently good. The headteacher has a good understanding of what needs to be done to improve the school. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve. This is because its self-evaluation is accurate and there is a clear focus on school improvement. This can be seen in the steps taken to improve the use of assessment data.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Provide more challenging opportunities in lessons for the more-able pupils to use and develop their writing and numeracy skills in order to raise their achievement.
- Increase the involvement of subject leaders in monitoring and evaluating their areas of responsibility in order to improve pupils' progress and raise standards further.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

In lessons, pupils are keen to do well and work well with one another. Where teaching is satisfactory pupils show less enthusiasm but still behave well. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. School assessment records and inspection findings show that a recent dip in pupils' progress in Years 1 and 2 has been addressed successfully. In lessons, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make satisfactory academic progress and, where teaching is good, even better progress. However, the more-able pupils are not consistently challenged to use their numeracy and writing skills well. There are some good examples of their writing in literacy books, but in topic and science workbooks, writing tasks are undemanding. In those mathematics lessons in which teaching is no better than satisfactory, the problems set lack sufficient challenge for the abler pupils.

Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong and this underpins their good behaviour. Older pupils really enjoy helping younger ones, in the aptly named 'seeds and gardeners' initiative. Pupils are keen to take on responsibility and school council members say they are proud to represent 'their' school. Through the good links made with a school with a different ethnic mix, pupils have developed a good understanding of cultural issues and have a deep respect for those who come from a background different from their own. Pupils say bullying is rare and dealt with quickly if it occurs. Most pupils are committed to a healthy lifestyle and recognise the importance of regular exercise. Positive attitudes, good social skills and average attainment mean that pupils' preparation for life after school is satisfactory.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<sup>1</sup> 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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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

Teaching is satisfactory overall; however, there are examples of good and occasionally outstanding teaching throughout the school. Where teaching is no better than satisfactory, opportunities are missed to use searching questions to probe pupils' understanding and the work set for the more-able pupils is not challenging enough. Where teaching is good or better, activities are well planned to engage pupils' interests and teachers ensure that all groups of pupils are suitably challenged to extend their learning. In all classes, there are very good relationships between pupils and teachers. Teaching assistants provide highly effective personal support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Assessment systems have recently been improved and the information gathered is used increasingly to good effect. For example, older pupils are very clear about what they need to do to improve their work because targets have been set that clearly indicate the next stages in their learning. This good practice is now in the process of being extended across the school. While marking is satisfactory, opportunities are missed to provide points for improvement in pupils' topic work.

The curriculum is satisfactory with a good emphasis placed on pupils' personal development. There is a good range of enrichment activities, including a gardening club and sports clubs. Visits to places, such as Towneley Hall, are used well to make history come alive and pupils say how much they enjoy experiencing what life might have been like in Tudor times.

The care, support and guidance pupils receive are major strengths of the school. Staff know the pupils very well and are keen to provide any help that is required. There are

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good induction systems in place to enable pupils to settle into school quickly. The school has a well-led team of highly experienced staff who provide excellent support for pupils with emotional and social problems. No stone is left unturned in ensuring that pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable have the personal support they need. This includes before-school provision and the full involvement of parents. There are effective links with external agencies which provide additional help if required. Attendance is monitored closely. The school is rightly proud of pupils' good attendance. Parents are very positive about the support they and their children receive.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The school has an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses, through effective systems to measure its overall performance. However, strategies to improve academic standards further have yet to be fully effective. This is a key factor in pupils' achievement being satisfactory rather than good. For example, staff with subject responsibilities have not developed their strategic roles sufficiently well to bring about improvements in their subject areas. There are good management strategies in place to deal with the challenge of managing a school based in three buildings. Governors fulfil their legal responsibilities and are satisfactorily involved in school self-evaluation. The newly appointed Chair of the Governing Body has, in a relatively short period of time, established good relationships with the headteacher and his staff.

Safeguarding procedures at the time of the inspection met requirements well, with clear policies and guidelines for ensuring pupils' welfare. There are good partnerships with parents, including a parents' forum. There are also strong partnerships outside school, for example, with the local church and with Burnley football club. While it is very clear that any forms of discrimination are not tolerated in the school, equality of opportunity is satisfactory rather than good because the more-able pupils need greater challenge academically. The school has undertaken evaluation of its good community cohesion provision. It has a clear view of its local context and established close links with the wider community. For example, during the inspection, pupils from a school outside the immediate area shared their opinions and ideas with Saint Mary's pupils, as part of a regular interchange of pupils.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children achieve well from starting points in the nursery that are below that expected for children of this age. They make good progress and attainment is broadly similar to that of all children nationally by the time they enter Year 1. Children settle quickly in school because the staff team have a good understanding of every child's individual needs. A high priority is given to children feeling safe and secure. The strong focus on children's social and emotional development enables them to develop a positive attitude to learning, as well as developing the skills of working and playing in harmony with one another. Indoors, children are able to make choices from an increasing range of activities and resources and they work independently on activities, such as early writing and model making. However, there is a lack of information and communication technology resources available in the Nursery. Overall provision is satisfactory rather than good, because insufficient use is made of the outside area to promote children's learning. There is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated learning in the classrooms covering all the areas of learning. Observations and assessments are used well by staff to inform their planning, resulting in good teaching and learning. Staff are deployed well to initiate and support learning. There are good partnerships with parents. Leadership and management are good with a clear sense of teamwork to ensure all children achieve well. The school's action plan shows that the deficiencies in outdoor activities have been identified.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## **Views of parents and carers**

Parents who replied are very positive about aspects of school life including the way in which the school cares for and educates their children and the way that the school is led and managed. There was no evidence to support any concerns expressed. Some parents took time to add comments to the questionnaires they returned to reinforce the strength of their very positive views.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School, Burnley 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 77 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 323 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	53	69	23	30	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	60	78	17	22	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	34	44	34	44	7	9	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	47	35	45	6	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	42	55	34	44	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	38	49	31	40	7	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	41	53	34	44	1	1	0	0
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)	37	48	35	45	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	41	53	31	40	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	24	31	43	56	7	9	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	39	41	53	3	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	38	49	36	47	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	49	64	23	30	2	3	0	0

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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



28 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School, Burnley, BB10 4BH

My colleagues and I were very pleased to meet you and have the chance to talk to some of you when we inspected your school recently. Thank you so much for helping us and making us feel welcome. We enjoyed meeting you, not only in lessons, but also in the playground and at lunchtime. It is really good to find a school where there is so little absence. It shows us that you really enjoy school and like the activities provided. It was wonderful to hear about how much the older pupils had enjoyed their residential visit during the autumn term.

These are some of the things we found out.

- You enjoy school and say you feel safe.
- You have a good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles.
- Behaviour in school is good.
- The children in the Nursery and Reception classes get off to a good start
- You like your teachers.

We agree with your school that it provides you with a satisfactory standard of education. However, there are some important things the school needs to do to make it even better. It needs to provide more opportunities for those of you who find learning easier than most to use your writing skills well in all subjects. Also you need to be really challenged to use your numeracy skills to solve problems. Another important thing to be improved is for children in the Nursery and Reception classes to be given plenty of opportunities to use the outside area to support the good work they do in the classrooms. Finally, the school needs to make sure that those teachers with responsibilities for subject areas lead and manage the subjects more effectively. I am sure that you will do your very best to help the headteacher, staff and governors make the changes that are necessary to make your school even better.

Yours sincerely

Mr Geoffrey Yates

Lead inspector

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