



Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

**Better
education
and care**

Unique Reference Number 104479
Local Authority Knowsley
Inspection number 286955
Inspection dates 21–22 February 2007
Reporting inspector Mr Frank Carruthers

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Moorfield
School category	Voluntary aided		Tower Hill
Age range of pupils	3–11		Kirkby
			Merseyside
			L33 1DZ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0151 5486890
Number on roll	320	Fax number	0151 5480179
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr George McKenzie
Date of previous school inspection	June 2001	Headteacher	Mr Joe White

Age group	Inspection date(s)	Inspection no.
3–11	21–22 February 2007	286955

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This above average sized primary school serves an area of Kirkby on Merseyside. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is more than twice the average for most primary schools, as is the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Their range of needs is broad and covers specific learning difficulties, speech and language needs and social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and none learns English as an additional language. The school offers a number of additional services to parents and has been awarded the SportsMark.

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 is providing a good education for pupils and has some outstanding features. Pupils make excellent progress in their personal development thanks to the outstanding care, guidance and support the school provides. From the very earliest days in Nursery, the children gain confidence, self-discipline and excellent attitudes to learning. Pupils' awareness of matters of personal safety and the importance of a healthy lifestyle is excellent. It is the caring and supportive ethos of the school which drives this. Pupils make good progress throughout the school in English, mathematics and science from a very low level of attainment on entry to Nursery. By the time they are in Year 6 pupils have reached standards that are broadly average. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make similarly good progress thanks to the excellent support they receive. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in English, mathematics and science, however, has been below average for several years.

The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage, that is the Nursery and Reception classes, are good overall but the layout of the outdoor area has shortcomings and the Reception class has no immediate point of access to it. Teaching and learning across all classes are good and lead to the good progress the pupils make. All staff know the pupils and their needs very well and lessons are well planned to promote basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). The curriculum is well planned and contributes much to the pupils' enjoyment of school, being enriched, for example, through a good range of extra-curricular activities.

Leadership and management are good and teamwork is a key strength. The school is exceptionally well led by the headteacher. Governors carry out their responsibilities well and have a good overview of the school's performance and provision. The school's management analyses data about its performance closely and acts upon it, identifying where improvements are needed. As a result, it evaluates its work well. The school has made good progress since the last inspection, has good capacity to improve and gives good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the level of challenge for higher-attaining pupils so that they reach the higher Level 5 in English, mathematics and science in Year 6.
- Improve the access to and the quality of the outdoor area for children in the Foundation Stage.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage because of good teaching and learning. Most start in Nursery with very low attainment in their personal and social development, communication and language skills, and mathematical development. By the end of the Reception year most children have made considerable gains in their learning, especially in their personal development, though they are still working towards the early learning goals expected of children at this age.

Progress continues to be good throughout Years 1 to 6. It is uniformly good across all year groups. Standards in English and mathematics in the current Year 6 are average and pupils have achieved well over time from a very low level of attainment on entry to Nursery. The proportion of pupils predicted to reach the higher Level 5 is about half the national average. Aware of this, the school has recently introduced a policy for enhancing the achievement of higher-attaining, gifted and talented pupils but it is too soon to judge the impact.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. Behaviour is good and often excellent in lessons and around the school. Pupils report that they enjoy school very much and this is evident in the way they enthusiastically attend extra-curricular activities. Excellent concentration, listening and participation in prayers and hymns were evident in the Ash Wednesday assembly held during the inspection. The school deals promptly with and supports exceptionally well the few pupils who display challenging behaviour. Rare incidents of bullying are dealt with similarly. As one pupil commented: 'Teaching is great; it is a well led school; the rules are not too harsh; the class teachers are fair and they use good methods.' Levels of attendance are satisfactory. There has been a clear pattern of sustained improvement, which has been the result of the school's robust procedures, so that attendance is now exactly in line with the national average.

Pupils have a very good understanding of the importance of a sensible and healthy lifestyle and make wise choices for lunch. They show sensitivity to and care for the safety of others in and around the school and also have a very secure understanding of how to stay safe outside school. The pupils make good contributions to the school's community: older pupils act as buddies to support younger pupils, setting a good example, and pupils generously support charity appeals. All pupils make good progress in basic skills and develop excellent attitudes and cooperative behaviour. These skills give them an excellent start in the next stages of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

There is good teaching and learning in all year groups. Teachers know the pupils well and are very receptive to their individual needs. Their questions are perceptive and encourage pupils to think logically and to gain confidence. Planning is good and caters well for the individual needs of pupils. Those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are catered for very well, particularly when they are supported by good quality teaching assistants. Teachers are good at breaking down tasks into small steps of progress and this was seen at its best in an outstanding mathematics lesson in a Year 2 class. Assessment is detailed and informative and leads to effective planning for learning. The level of challenge for higher attainers is too low in some lessons, however. There are examples of high quality marking which informs the pupils of what they need to do next, for instance in Years 2, 3 and 4, but this is not consistent in all classes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is well planned and balanced. There is a strong emphasis given to literacy, numeracy, science and ICT. The curriculum contributes strongly to pupils' enjoyment of school. Following a review of science last year, the key focus this year is to improve the pupils' skills of reading and spelling. The creative curriculum is currently being enhanced, too. The school has achieved the SportsMark and this promotes well the school's aim for pupils to develop a healthy and fit lifestyle. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities and residential experiences. In the Foundation Stage the curriculum is well planned and offers the children exciting experiences. Provision indoors is outstanding. However, there is limited access to the outdoor area for children in the Reception class. This has been identified as a weakness by the school, and the layout of the space has shortcomings.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The staff's commitment to the welfare of pupils is excellent. Arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils, such as child protection procedures, the safe recruitment of staff and risk assessment, are in place. There are excellent systems for monitoring and supporting the welfare and progress of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, of looked-after children and of others experiencing times of crisis or stress. The learning mentor contributes extremely effectively in these aspects. Excellent professional training of staff supports pupils who are particularly vulnerable. For example, the school has set up a number of special groups to help pupils to behave and to learn better. Pupils with additional needs are identified very early and there is extensive involvement of outside agencies to do the best for these pupils. Parents are

included well in reviewing their children's progress and comment very favourably on how staff are approachable and supportive. A typical comment is 'The staff certainly have the children's best interest at heart.' The school also runs several courses to promote parenting skills and basic skills. There are very good transition arrangements both with the pre-school settings and on transfer to secondary school. The tracking of pupils' personal and academic progress is excellent. Parents and pupils are well informed about the targets pupils have.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Overall, leadership and management are good. Leadership by the headteacher is outstanding and has been sustained over his twelve years in post. His expertise and high quality practice have been acknowledged by the local authority and used to develop the expertise of other headteachers. His work has established not only an ethos which is caring and supportive but one which is focused on achievement. Recent changes in the structure of the senior leadership team have built well on established systems and the new assistant headteachers are developing into an effective and cohesive team.

The monitoring of the school's performance is good and there are regular opportunities to observe the quality of teaching and to scrutinise pupils' work. These procedures have helped the school's self-evaluation process well. Managers' views on personal development and well-being, care, guidance and support, and the curriculum match those of the inspection. The school overestimated the achievement of pupils, which inspectors have judged as good rather than outstanding. The school's views on teaching and learning and leadership and management are also over-generous. Nevertheless, the school's self-evaluation has identified the right areas for improvement and created a well focused and prioritised school development plan.

Governance is good and there is outstanding and sustained leadership by the chairperson. The governors are very well involved in school development planning and have recently begun to forge strong links with subject leaders and the assistant headteachers.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.</i>	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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness and efficiency of boarding provision	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The <i>standards</i> ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make <i>progress</i> , taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

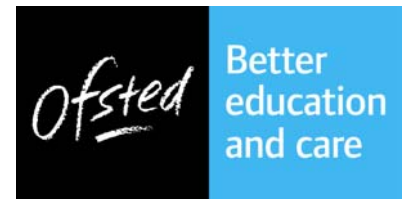
¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources 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



The School Council
Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School
Moorfields
Kirkby
L33 1DZ

23 February 2007

Dear Pupils

Thank you very much for your help when we inspected your school. Please pass on our thanks to the other children we met and spoke to while we were at school. We enjoyed our visit very much. Now we want to share with you what we thought about your school.

Yours is a good school and has some outstanding features. For instance:

- the staff take excellent care of you all and teach you well
- your headteacher is outstanding in the way he leads your school
- your attitude to your school work is excellent and it is clear that you really enjoy school and are growing into sensible students
- we were impressed with how well you are doing in English, mathematics and science
- the staff provide you with good opportunities to enjoy activities after school and to go on residential visits and trips.

To make the school even better, we want the staff to make sure they give you challenging work to do, especially the more able ones among you. We want you all to do as well as you can, so work hard and enjoy school! We also want the staff to improve the outdoor area for the children who are in the Nursery and Reception classes.

With every good wish to you all for the future

Frank Carruthers
Lead inspector