

# Thorneyholme Roman Catholic Primary School, Dunsop Bridge

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119689
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	379870
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	David Byrne

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>	32
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Amanda Parker
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Healey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 December 2008
<b>School address</b>	Trough Road Dunsop Bridge Clitheroe BB7 3BG
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## Introduction

Inspection team

David Byrne

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed three teachers teaching seven lessons. In addition, a short visit was made to observe a phonics lesson and time was spent listening to pupils read. Meetings were held with one parent, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. He observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including the school improvement plan, the self-evaluation, documents related to safeguarding and samples of the pupils' work. The inspector evaluated the responses from 20 parental questionnaires as well as those from staff and pupils.

## Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school. It serves a rural area and most pupils rely on transport to get to school. The number of pupils in each year group is very low with as few as one, two or three pupils. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low. The vast majority of pupils are from White British heritage and few speak English as an additional language. The percentage of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below average, but the percentage with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The school meets the current floor standard.

Since the previous inspection, the school has been led and managed for two days a week by an associate headteacher. The current associate headteacher took up post in September 2011. The number of classes has contracted from three to two because numbers have dropped due to changes in County transport regulations. There is a part-time pre-school group and an after-school club provided.

Recent accreditations include the Activemark for physical education, the silver Eco School award and the Lancashire Healthy School status.

**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

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key Findings

- This is a good school. An extremely positive and welcoming ethos promotes pupils' enjoyment of learning. Behaviour and safety are exemplary. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, emanating from the highly caring ethos of the school. Parents and carers rate the school very highly and it makes a vital contribution to the local community. It is not outstanding because attainment could be better in writing and there are variations in some aspects of teaching.
- Achievement is good. Pupils make good progress. From starting points in the Early Years Foundation Stage that are typical for children of their age, pupils' attainment rises to above average by the end of Year 6. Strengths exist in mathematics and reading but in writing, attainment is lower, mainly because too few boys attain above the expected levels for their age. A good curriculum widens pupils' knowledge and understanding and enables them to grow into confident and articulate youngsters. At its best, the curriculum enables pupils to apply their writing skills across subjects. Such practice is not always exploited enough to assure the best possible attainment.
- Good teaching meets the diverse needs of different ages and abilities in each class. Effective support for pupils with a statement of special educational needs ensures their full inclusion in school life. Assessment is accurate, although not all pupils are fully secure in knowing what they need to do to improve their work. Too few opportunities are provided for pupils to make choices about their learning and this prevents progress from being outstanding.
- Strong leadership by the governing body and associate headteacher gives very clear educational direction, offers good leadership of teaching and gives a good capacity for on-going improvement. The school's performance is rigorously checked which provides the basis for effectively prioritising areas for improvement.

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

- Improve attainment in writing for all pupils and in particular boys by:
  - providing boys with writing tasks that better reflect their interests and that motivate them to increase the quantity and improve the quality of their writing
  - raising the profile of writing across the school and in classrooms
  - increasing the frequency with which pupils apply their writing skills in all subjects.
  
- Raise the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to work independently across the school, including carrying out open-ended investigations in all subjects
  - creating a more vibrant environment which celebrates pupils' good work and exemplifies excellent work to which they can aspire
  - ensuring that pupils develop a deeper understanding of how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve their work.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils very much enjoy learning. They soak up new ideas and like to learn new facts and to gather information. Pupils in Key Stage 1 were fascinated by their mini-beast hunt and eagerly sought information about what they had found, using non-fiction reading books. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs learn at a good rate, benefitting from high quality day-to-day care and support. Pupils' considerable enjoyment of learning contributes to the good progress they make across the school. Parents and carers are unanimous that their children make good progress. This matches inspection findings.

Children generally start school with skills that are typical for their age. They make steady progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, starting Year 1 with average attainment. In Key Stages 1 and 2, attainment rises at a good rate. Pupils' progress between Years 2 and 6 is generally good and better than is expected nationally. By the end of Year 6, attainment is typically above average in English and mathematics and pupils also do well in sport and art. Reading attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is above average and the percentage of pupils gaining Level 4 in English and mathematics exceeds the national expectation. Boys do not do as well as girls in writing. This is partly because the curriculum is not always inspiring enough for boys and does not reflect their interests. It is also because the profile of the importance of writing across the school is not high enough. There are insufficient examples on display of excellent work completed by pupils, to which all could aspire. Pupils have a good knowledge of mathematics and science, but their investigative skills are underdeveloped and this sometimes inhibits effective learning.

## Quality of teaching

Parents and carers are almost unanimous that their children are taught well. Inspection findings support this view. Warm and very caring relationships between staff and pupils create a non-threatening environment in which to learn. Pupils feel secure and safe and willingly respond to all that is asked of them. Lessons are usually pitched at the right level and lead to good learning. At times, however, not enough is asked of pupils to initiate their own learning or pursue their own ideas.

The quality of teaching is enhanced by a number of positive curriculum initiatives which widen pupils' understanding and knowledge of the topics they are studying and enhances their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils were animated when they explained, for example, their work on the Rainforest and the information provided by a Rainforest expert. Others were really keen to explain the fun generated by the visit of a mobile science caravan. Although there is much provided in the way of visits and visitors, which broaden pupils' experiences, pupils report that in lessons they would like more practical activities and fewer demonstrations. Most lessons have a clear purpose which is shared with pupils, but at times this clarity is not evident when lessons end because pupils are not fully aware of how well they have learnt and what they could do better. Classrooms have many displays of information for pupils but this is at the expense of celebrating the best examples of pupils' work. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs benefit from the high levels of care provided by all staff and also other pupils. Effective teaching of sounds and letters (phonics) in Key Stage 1 is building a good foundation for pupils' reading and writing skills.

Assessment is regular and systematic. The information gained is used by staff to set targets for individual pupils and increase the pace of learning because pupils' needs are identified. Pupils are not fully secure in evaluating their own progress and achievement or in recognising independently how to improve their work.

## Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour is impeccable. Their enjoyment of school is reflected in their high attendance. These positive outcomes are testament to the excellent relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults. Everyone cares for each other and if pupils fall out, a rare event, there is always someone there to help. Parents, carers and pupils are adamant that the school is safe and praise the family atmosphere. Bullying in all forms is virtually non-existent and excellent procedures are in place to deal with incidents swiftly and effectively. Most pupils are very positive about recent changes to the way that behaviour is managed reporting that the 'red slip' idea is an effective deterrent. The team system and the rewards accrued from gaining points are also popular, encouraging and promoting desirable outcomes. Pupils are aware of different types of bullying and how to stay safe, and they act responsibly at all times, for example when using the excellent quality 'trim trail.' Activities, such as the highly popular gardening club and the subsequent cooking activities using the produce, successfully widen the pupils understanding of healthy eating. Pupils are aware of the importance of protecting the planet and do their best to help the environment by recycling, growing their own vegetables and composting. One pupil stated that the most important thing on Earth was the tree, because it gives us

oxygen. Such excellent attitudes provide pupils with a positive outlook for their future. Pre- and after-school provision ensures that pupils who attend these have a positive start to their day, are safe and gainfully occupied before going home.

## **Leadership and management**

The school is well managed and governance is excellent. The promotion of equality of opportunity is high on the school's agenda and everyone is valued as an individual. The school rejects discrimination in all its forms. The associate headteacher has gained the respect of parents, carers and staff and gives a very clear vision for how the school is to move forward. This is underpinned by astute evaluations of areas which need to be improved. All staff are dedicated and willing to learn from others. The close and increasing collaboration with other schools is broadening the experiences and expertise of all staff and adding to their continued professional development. The school knows itself well and is continuously seeking ways to improve. Recent consultations with parents and carers, for example, have led to more sport provided in school. Underpinning the school's success in maintaining its educational direction during its recent changes are the efforts of the governing body. Its excellent leadership ensures that members have a deep understanding of the performance of the school and of the needs of its pupils and their families. Wise decisions make the best use of the budget and great effort is put into attracting new pupils. Decisions to establish the pre-school group and an after-school club are increasing the breadth of the school's provision.

The curriculum is good and offers a number of exciting experiences for pupils. New ideas are always welcome and staff are keenly aware of the importance of opening up the pupils' understanding of the world. By including French teaching, visiting France, involvement in an archaeological exploration and participating in passing an Olympic torch between schools to Salford cathedral, pupils develop an understanding of life beyond their locality. Music is experienced by all, with pupils currently learning the keyboard, and drama features alongside other subjects. Opportunities for independent learning are too few, which somewhat limits progress. The curriculum has a positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and contributes to impressive levels of personal development of most pupils.

The school is safe and secure and meets all safeguarding requirements. Procedures for securing child protection and removing all reasonable risk are robust. Partnerships with parents and carers are good and have a very positive impact on the learning and progress of pupils. The monthly newsletter, which is attractively presented, keeps everyone informed about what is happening in school and the school website offers another valuable source of information. The day-to-day management of the school is excellent and benefits from the expertise of a skilled administrator and the contribution of the site supervisor. The school states that it offers a warm welcome to all and, indeed, this is the case.

## Glossary

### 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.
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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.



## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



7 March 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Thorneyholme Roman Catholic Primary School, Dunsop Bridge, Clitheroe BB7 3BG**

It was a privilege to spend two days in your school recently. Thanks to each of you for sharing your lessons, talking with me and showing me your work. You attend a good school. It prepares you well for the next stage of your education by ensuring you have above-average skills in English and mathematics and by developing your self-confidence and interest in learning. Your behaviour is exemplary; in many ways you are like one large family in which everyone cares for each other.

Teachers and support staff know each of you very well and give you work that is of interest. Those of you needing extra help are given good support so that no one misses out on anything the school provides. Many good experiences are given to you to make school fun such as the visit to France, the breeding of trout and the visit of the science caravan. Despite the changes in the school in recent years with the reduction from three to two classes, your education has not suffered. This is because of the skills and dedication of the governors and the experience of your headteacher.

Part of my job is to suggest ways of improving the school. I have asked that more is done to raise your attainment in writing, especially that of boys, and also to improve some aspects of teaching to make your learning even better. You would benefit from being encouraged to work more independently and to follow your own interests more often.

Well done to all of you for attending school so regularly. I am sure that you will all continue to do so and also enjoy school and all that it offers. I wish you all the very best for your lives and hope that you are all happy and successful.

Yours sincerely

David Byrne  
Lead Inspector

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