

INSPECTION REPORT

THORNEYHOLME ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Trough Road, Dunsop Bridge,
Clitheroe, Lancashire BB7 3BG

LEA area : Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119689

Headteacher: Mr Andrew Wood

Reporting inspector
Mrs Jennifer Deans : 17919

Dates of inspection
16 October – 18 October 2000

Inspection number: 224272

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Trough Road Dunsop Bridge Clitheroe Lancashire
Postcode:	BB7 3BG
Telephone number:	01200 448276
Fax number:	01200 448276
E-mail address:	head@thorneyholme.lancsngfl.ac.uk
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev Father John Chaloner
Date of previous inspection:	27 January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	
Mrs Jennifer Deans 17919	Registered inspector
Mrs Eva Mills 13459	Lay inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Doncaster Inspection Services
PO Box 266
The Council House
College Road
DONCASTER
South Yorkshire
DN1 3AD

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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Thorneyholme is a small primary school. There are 40 pupils on roll which is well below average for this type of school. No pupil is eligible for free school meals, well below the national average. There are four pupils on the register of Special Educational Needs (SEN), one of whom has a statement of SEN. This is not significantly different from the national average. The school has no pupil for whom English is an additional language. There is no nursery provision, but the school provides pre-school experience on one afternoon every week. Attainment on entry to school is not significantly different from the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Thorneyholme Roman Catholic Primary is a very effective school. It provides a high quality education which leads to very high standards of attainment.

What the school does well

- The school very effectively fulfils its mission statement. It is without doubt 'a welcoming Catholic/Community school...a happy family providing a just and caring environment in which everyone is recognised and valued as an individual'.
- Results in national tests for seven year olds and for eleven year olds are consistently high.
- The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been very effectively implemented within a curriculum which continues to be broad and to have a good emphasis on the arts.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and behave very well.
- Teaching is very good; there is a very positive approach to professional development.
- The recently appointed headteacher has quickly established very effective teamwork with other staff; governors have a strong commitment to the school and fulfil their responsibilities well.
- Parents are happy with the education provided by the school.

What could be improved

- The time allocation to support professional development, especially that of the recently appointed headteacher, and to meet the demands of continuous monitoring of the curriculum and of teaching is insufficient.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The last inspection in January 1997 found the school to be a good school. Since then it has maintained its many strengths and continued to improve. This is particularly commendable as the school was without a headteacher for four terms. Over the last four years standards of attainment of pupils leaving the school have been well above average. A significant percentage of pupils achieve at a level above the national average in English, mathematics and science. The key issues identified at the last inspection have been appropriately addressed. The school has the commitment, the qualities and the expertise to continue to improve.

STANDARDS

Because the number of pupils in any one cohort leaving the school is less than 10, there is no table showing the school's results in comparison with national results.

Nevertheless, the attainment of pupils at eleven is judged to be very high in English and mathematics and well above average in science. Evidence from this inspection confirms these high standards for eleven year olds. Standards of reading and writing throughout Key Stage 2 are good. Pupils are also achieving well in science, in information and communication technology (ICT) and in religious education. Work in other subjects of the curriculum is above average, with the exception of physical education where standards are just satisfactory. The attainment of seven year olds is equally impressive, with a number of pupils achieving at a level above the national average in both English and mathematics. All pupils make very good progress in reading, in writing and in mathematics. Pupils with special needs make very good progress and, by the time they leave school, the standards they attain are not significantly different from the national average.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	
Attitudes to the school	Very good indeed. Pupils are enthusiastic and confident learners.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good in lessons, and at all other times.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils care for and respect each other, and respond very positively to all adults. They work well in collaboration with others, but also demonstrate good independent learning skills.
Attendance	Good. Pupils are punctual; all lessons start promptly.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very Good	Very Good	Good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

Overall the quality of teaching is very good. Some excellent practice was observed, notably in the way in which teachers cater so well for the wide age and ability range within both classes.

Teachers are very clear about what they want pupils to learn and they give lively and interesting explanations. They plan very effectively, using information from assessments as well as their detailed knowledge of individuals. This results in all pupils being actively involved in learning, being given appropriate support and being challenged. Expectations are always high, with an element of extension and independent learning built into many tasks. The teachers enjoy teaching and plan imaginative and purposeful activities which help the pupils to enjoy their learning. There is a very good emphasis on purposeful talk, and on the development of literacy and numeracy skills, in all lessons. Teaching in the Key Stage 1 class is enhanced by the outstanding quality of interaction between the nursery nurse and the under fives.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. There is appropriate emphasis on English and mathematics but other subjects receive due attention.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Teachers and other adults are very clear about pupils' needs, and the quality of the intervention leads to very good progress from an early age.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	N/A
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Excellent provision for spiritual, social and moral development and good provision for cultural development contribute very well to the overall personal development of individual pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	All pupils are very well cared for within the Christian family of the school

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school has a very clear direction which reflects its Catholic ethos. The headteacher and staff have established a very strong team, all of whom willingly take a lead in areas of school development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors meet their responsibilities and are very supportive of the school. There is a deep commitment to the school mission statement and to high standards of achievement in all areas.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good in using data to identify strengths and areas which need attention. Very clear about the quality of teaching, although monitoring procedures are not fully developed. Very good awareness of the impact which spending decisions have on the quality of education.
The strategic use of	Good. The governing body has a cautious approach to the budget,

resources	<p>but money is spent wisely and all resources are used efficiently. As a result of careful planning for a building extension, accommodation is good and now requires only minor modification to enable even more effective delivery of the physical education curriculum.</p> <p>Pupils enter school with average levels of attainment and by the time they leave at eleven are attaining at very high levels. The school's costs per pupil are high, as is the case with all very small schools. It applies the principles of best value in its spending and is giving good value for money.</p>
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PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The welcome given by the school • The high expectations • The quality of the teaching • The very good behaviour of the children • The good progress made by individuals • The fact that their children like school • The close working relationship with parents • The effective leadership and management of the school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information about how their child is getting on • The extent of extra-curricular provision

The inspection team fully agrees with the strengths identified by parents, but does not concur with the areas of dissatisfaction. Annual reports to parents are appropriately detailed and identify clearly the strengths and development needs of each pupil. The recent introduction of an additional parents' evening, together with the school's 'open door' policy lead us to believe that the school is doing all it can to keep parents informed. The school takes part in many community events, including football tournaments with neighbouring small schools, church festivals and village social activities. Pupils are frequently encouraged to enhance their learning during the lunch break; small groups were observed sending e-mails and extending other ICT skills with the teacher. A large number of regular extra-curricular activities is very difficult to provide because of the small number of pupils in any one year group, transport issues and the relatively few members of the teaching staff.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The school very effectively fulfils its mission statement. It is without doubt ‘a welcoming Catholic/Community school...a happy family providing a just and caring environment in which everyone is recognised and valued as an individual’

1. The family atmosphere within the school is striking. The example provided by the adults in the way in which they relate to each other, to parents, to visitors and to the children provides an excellent model for the pupils. Older pupils care for younger children and the younger pupils aspire to the achievements of their older classmates. Governors and staff are very keen that the pupils feel a sense of real belonging, not only to the community of the school but to their wider community, and they provide many opportunities to develop this. One example is the active involvement of all pupils with the local church.
2. The mission statement of the school is very effectively met in practice. All pupils are known and valued as individuals; the children treat teachers, support assistants, lunchtime staff and all adult helpers with equal respect. Parents are very supportive of the school and make a very positive contribution to its resources. ICT equipment and expertise is generously given, as is transport to enable the frequent visits. The strong links between home and school enrich the children's learning.
3. The school is a place of learning where the governing body, parents and staff are justifiably proud, not only of the high standards attained in national tests, but of the high achievements within pupils' personal development.

Results in national tests for seven year olds and for eleven year olds are consistently high.

4. With such a small number of pupils in each year group, comparison of results must be treated with caution. However, the results of the 1999 national tests for eleven year olds show that pupils' attainment is very high in English and in mathematics and well above average in science. Three of the four pupils leaving the school attained level 5 in English and mathematics, a grade higher than the national expectation. Results since the last inspection in 1997 show that this level of performance is not unusual. Boys and girls perform equally well.
5. Results in the 1999 national tests for seven year olds are equally impressive. In reading the performance of pupils is well above average and in writing and mathematics it is very high. Three of the six pupils attained the higher level 3 in reading and in mathematics. In science, teacher assessments show all pupils to attain at or above expectations.
6. The work seen during the inspection was of a consistently high standard. The quality and range of the writing in both key stages demonstrates pupils' understanding of writing for different purposes and their ability to sustain an appropriate style. Key Stage 1 pupils showed a good facility with use of language in their Humpty Dumpty poems - as well as good use of imagination and a mischievous sense of humour! In their paired narrative writing based on The Gingerbread Man they produced some excellent descriptive passages.
7. Very good provision of both fiction and non-fiction reading materials has resulted in pupils becoming fluent and expressive readers who thoroughly enjoy a wide range of literature. Key Stage 2 pupils respond sensitively to a range of poetry, to Macbeth and to novels by such authors as Ann Fine and Alan Garner. Older Key Stage 2 pupils demonstrated a high level of skill in adapting information and presenting it in a different form when writing magazine articles based on a non-fiction text about Guy Fawkes. Within all lessons teachers provide good opportunities for

discussion, for pair and group collaboration and for oral presentation of work. This results in high standards of speaking and listening.

8. Standards observed in the daily mathematics lessons were high. Pupils' ability to handle number is very good indeed. A focus on oral work and mental calculations is very much enjoyed by the pupils and they respond with enthusiasm to the challenges set. Pupils are encouraged to explain the strategies which they use and many are able to do so confidently and articulately. Their understanding and use of mathematical language is excellent. Reception children name common 2 dimensional shapes confidently and Key Stage 1 pupils explain the properties of, for example, triangular prisms. The investigative approach used in many of the mathematics lessons challenges all pupils to think, to apply their understanding and skills and to work both collaboratively and independently.
9. Standards in science and in ICT are good. Key Stage 2 pupils are developing a facility with computers which, among other things, allows them to send e-mail attachments and to undertake independent research. Standards in all other subjects are above average, except in physical education where they are just satisfactory. The school is addressing this issue.
10. Central to the commitment to maintain very high standards is a detailed knowledge of individual pupil progress and a clear understanding of what they need to do next. Careful analysis of test results and of teacher assessments leads to clear focus on those small areas where there is room for improvement.

The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been very effectively implemented within a curriculum which continues to be broad and to have a good emphasis on the arts.

11. The school has worked hard to implement the national strategies for both literacy and numeracy within mixed age classes. The teachers are knowledgeable and plan thoroughly, both to cover the framework and to meet the needs of all pupils. Although English and mathematics take up a substantial amount of time every day, opportunities are sought within all curriculum areas to further enhance literacy and numeracy skills.
12. No subject is neglected and the school plans an interesting programme of visits to provide first-hand learning experiences. Some of the work on display, resulting from activities within the local community such as a study of the Stocks Reservoir or a visit to the Lancashire Museum, shows how much benefit is derived from these opportunities.
13. Some pupils receive instrumental lessons from specialist music teachers, others learn recorder with the staff of the school, all have frequent opportunities to sing. Opportunities are taken to bring professional musicians into school to work with all the children. The art work on display was of a good standard.
14. There are many opportunities for pupils to use ICT and examples of all aspects of the subject were seen. Provision for ICT, which is already good, will be further improved as all staff receive the intensive training planned for next term.
15. The physical education curriculum has been somewhat limited, especially as regards gymnastics and dance, because of lack of indoor space. This problem has been resolved and the school is now doing all it can to bring about improved standards in this area.

Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and behave very well

16. Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school and are confident and well-motivated learners. They take

a keen interest in their lessons and often make links with experiences outside school. Many have a very good general knowledge which they are eager to extend by asking questions and by using their research skills. Group and pair work is impressive; children listen with respect and put their own points of view confidently. They respond enthusiastically to problem solving activities, showing an increasing level of independence in their approach to tasks.

17. Pupils' behaviour in classrooms and around the school is very good They respond positively to their teachers' expectations and have a clear understanding of what is acceptable and what is not. At playtimes and lunchtimes pupils of all ages interact sociably, both in the playground and within the confines of the classrooms.

Teaching is very good; there is a very positive approach to professional development.

18. Overall the quality of teaching is very good, especially the teaching of English, mathematics and science. No unsatisfactory lesson was observed.
19. Teachers are very clear about what they want pupils to learn and they give lively and interesting explanations. They plan very effectively for the wide range of age and ability within the class which results in all pupils being actively involved in learning, being given appropriate support and being challenged. The mixed reception and Key Stage 1 class began the literacy lesson with the same shared text, The Gingerbread Man, which was followed by whole class role play where the teacher skilfully targeted questions to achieve maximum understanding and involvement. Group tasks were carefully prepared to match the abilities of the children and this enabled them all to make good progress. The very effective teamwork between the teacher and the nursery nurse results in excellent provision for the children who are still under five.
20. Expectations are always high, with an element of extension and independent learning built into many tasks. Year 2 pupils were observed completing a group mathematics task then sensibly beginning to make 3 dimensional shapes from nets, without disturbing the teacher who was working with Year 1 children. The challenging tasks in a Key Stage 2 literacy lesson, leading from a shared text about Guy Fawkes, resulted in high levels of concentration and perseverance. Pupils were keen to share their work at the end of the lesson and took pride in having done well.
21. The teachers enjoy teaching and plan imaginative and purposeful activities which help the pupils to enjoy their learning. The infant class was fully engrossed in a science lesson on the senses. They were eager to share what they had already learned, to predict what was in each of the 'small containers' and to add to their 'senses artwork'.
22. In all lessons there is a good emphasis on speaking and listening. Teachers' use of language is good, including technical language within different subject areas. They expect the pupils to understand and to use a wide range of vocabulary and ensure that they are given the opportunities to speak for many different purposes.
23. Teachers show an excellent knowledge of individual pupils, the stage they have reached in their learning and what they now need to do to continue to make good progress. Pupils are frequently reminded of their learning and of what they are working on. Assessments are used very effectively to plan appropriate whole class or group activities and to ensure that pupils are working at the right level.
24. This is a school where no learning opportunity appears to be missed. Lesson time is very well used and teachers ensure that their teaching enables pupils to make links with previous learning, with experiences outside school and with other subjects. Several groups of pupils were observed continuing their learning during the lunchtime. Within all subject areas teachers take opportunities to enhance pupils' personal development.

25. There is a whole school commitment to improvement. Teachers and other adults constantly discuss the curriculum, teaching strategies and pupil progress. They have a real desire to learn from each other's strengths. The school development plan has a well-planned programme of in-service training which includes all staff.

The recently appointed headteacher has quickly established very effective teamwork with other staff; governors have a strong commitment to the school and fulfil their responsibilities well.

26. The headteacher is a quietly efficient leader who, together with the governors, is providing a clear direction for the work of the school. He is very well supported by a small but very strong team. Teachers each take a leading role in curriculum developments, depending on individual expertise and school priorities, but there is always a team approach to improvement.
27. Curriculum planning and delivery and pupil work are monitored by the headteacher in consultation with staff. All have a good understanding of strengths and of areas requiring further development. Analysis of assessment data, especially from national tests, is very thorough. It leads to a clear focus on maintaining high standards. The governors and headteacher are planning a more formal programme of lesson observations which was not possible during the time that the school was without a permanent headteacher. Governors must ensure that the monitoring has a clear purpose and that the quality of the teaching provision is maintained when the headteacher is occupied with observations rather than his own class.
28. The governing body plays a close and supportive role in the management of the school and is well-informed about all aspects of development planning. There are appropriate sub-committees and named governors for specific responsibilities. They make a good contribution to decision making and to monitoring of spending and of developments. They have worked hard to secure the building extension which has significantly enhanced accommodation provision and will undoubtedly impact positively on the quality of many learning experiences.
29. There is a very cautious approach to budget planning to best address the needs of the school development plan and of all pupils. The school has been without a headteacher for some time, and the recently appointed headteacher has to meet the demands of both management and of class teaching. The headteacher and governors have a good awareness of the impact of spending decisions. The school is well resourced and it is clear that quality resources, effectively deployed, are impacting very positively on standards achieved. Additional resourcing to support staff development and curriculum monitoring would further improve provision.

Parents are happy with the education provided by the school.

30. Parents are highly satisfied with what the school does for their children. They feel that all the adults who work in the school know the children individually, care for them and respect them. They think that the school has been very successful in meeting the needs of all pupils within mixed age classes and in maintaining high standards of attainment. They have nothing but praise for the warm family ethos which is so much a part of the school and for the role that the school plays within the local community.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The time allocation to support professional development, especially that of the recently appointed headteacher, and to meet the demands of continuous monitoring

of the curriculum and of teaching, is insufficient.

31. Until the recent appointment the school was without a headteacher for four terms. The governors, staff and associate headteacher were very effective in ensuring that the standard of education was maintained, but inevitably there was less emphasis on school improvement, on the monitoring of curriculum and of teaching. The new headteacher demonstrates good leadership qualities. He has already established very positive relationships with the community of the school and very effective teamwork with staff. However, the time allocated to become fully conversant with all the demands and responsibilities of management, and to have appropriate knowledge and understanding of the fine detail of the curriculum and teaching in the mixed age classes, is insufficient.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

32. The school should now :

as the budget allows, plan for some additional time and resources to further support:

1. the professional development needs of all staff, but especially those of the recently appointed headteacher
2. the demands of curriculum planning and monitoring
3. the monitoring of teaching

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	15
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	5

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
7	46	40	7	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	-	40
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	-	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	-	4

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence	%	Unauthorised absence	%
School data	96.6	School data	0
National comparative data	94.1	National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	31
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.7
Average class size	19.5

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	31

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0

Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0

Number of pupils per FTE adult	0
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	108385
Total expenditure	100135
Expenditure per pupil	3129
Balance brought forward from previous year	14643
Balance carried forward to next year	22893

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	27
Number of questionnaires returned	27

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	31			
My child is making good progress in school.	70	26			4
Behaviour in the school is good.	70	30			
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	52	7		4
The teaching is good.	74	26			
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	33	15		4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	89	11			
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	85	15			
The school works closely with parents.	63	37			
The school is well led and managed.	63	37			
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	63	33			4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	15	52	19		15

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

[text] [replaces the table when there are fewer than ten returns]

Other issues raised by parents

[text] [a short comment should be included if applicable]