



St William of York RC Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 105226
LEA Bolton
Inspection number 277321
Inspection dates 21 September 2005 to 22 September 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs Rosemary Eaton CfBT Lead Inspector

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

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|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | Nugent Road |
| School category | Voluntary aided | | Bolton |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 | | Lancashire BL3 3DE |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01204 333522 |
| Number on roll | 248 | Fax number | 01204 333523 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair of governors | Rev. Mackie |
| Date of previous inspection | 11 September 2000 | Headteacher | Mrs Gerardine Babb |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

St William of York Roman Catholic Primary School is situated in an area with high levels of social and economic deprivation. Many of the school's children come from the most disadvantaged parts of Bolton. More children than average are eligible for free school meals. The number who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is about average. When they join the school, the attainment of most pupils is below average. In Years 1 to 6, roughly one in six pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and around half of these are refugees or asylum seekers. Approximately one in three is not a Catholic. At least 15 different languages are spoken by the pupils in addition to English, and over 1 in 10 are at an early stage of learning English. A very small number of pupils are Travellers and no pupils are in public care.

Key for inspection grades

| | |
|---------|--------------|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding |
| Grade 2 | Good |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate |

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St William of York is a good school with a number of outstanding features. The inspectors agreed with the school's judgements about its overall effectiveness and each aspect of its performance. Pupils make good progress during their time in the school. The standards they reach vary according to factors such as any learning difficulties and/or disabilities and, especially, how long they have been part of the school and their ability to speak English. Currently, the older pupils tend to have fewer of these barriers to learning, which is why their standards are higher. Standards are average overall. Foundation Stage children are provided for well and so they make good progress. Throughout the school, the quality of teaching is good and so is the curriculum. However, there is no consistent method of measuring the progress made by the lowest attaining pupils. The care, guidance and support provided are outstanding. As a result, from their first days in the nursery, pupils make exceptionally good progress in their personal development. They become confident and independent, relish learning and have a great deal of fun. Staff get to know each pupil amazingly quickly and work very hard to provide them with equal opportunities to learn and develop. Parents are informed and consulted regularly. The school is led and managed well. The headteacher, senior team and governors have very high expectations, plan carefully to enable all pupils to achieve as well as possible, and ensure that the school provides good value for money. In particular, the headteacher's clear and determined leadership has led to the school moving on well since the previous inspection, despite the increasingly complex nature of its intake. The enthusiasm and skills of the staff are harnessed and directed well and the school's capacity to improve is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Build on the measures taken already to raise the standards achieved by pupils with English as an additional language.
- Establish a whole-school system to measure and record the small steps in learning made by lower attaining pupils whose progress is slower than others.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

In recent years, the school has admitted increasing numbers of pupils whose first language is not English. Often, they speak no English when they join the school. This is the main reason why Year 2 pupils' scores in the 2004 national tests were below average.

In 2004, the school's overall Year 6 test results were better than average. The pupils who sat the tests in 2005 did not get such good results, although they met, or exceeded, the challenging targets set for them. A significant number had not attended the school for long and nearly a quarter were learning English as an additional language. Unsurprisingly, in the Years 2 and 6 tests, the pupils in the early stages of learning

English have the lowest scores. The school has also identified that girls' results tend to be better than boys.

Taken as a whole, standards across the school are average. This is because pupils do not all score highly in the tests, owing to barriers such as their limited knowledge of English. Nevertheless, all pupils, including those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make at least good progress and they achieve well. This can be seen in the difference between their achievement scores at age 7 when compared to their later results at age 11.

When they join the nursery, children's attainment is below average and many have poor social and language skills. In the nursery and reception classes, they progress well, although a significant number do not reach the standards expected by the end of their reception year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Racial harmony pervades the school. While maintaining its Catholic ethos, staff welcome and successfully celebrate the school's rich cultural mix through 'Multi-Faith Week' and teaching about the countries represented, such as Turkey, Zimbabwe and Iraq. Pupils of all ages and capabilities are encouraged to 'have a go' and persevere. Older pupils mature and learn to face their fears through personal challenges, for example, during residential visits, abseiling and raft building.

Mindful of the needs of others, pupils take on responsibilities from an early age, for example, the 'buddy' system, and fundraising for local and national charities. They are valued as young citizens and their opinions listened to. Older pupils have represented the school at the Children's Day Urban Summit in Manchester. Following a letter from pupils, expressing concern about levels of crime in the district, the Member of Parliament came to meet them and discuss the issue.

From their first day in the nursery, pupils enjoy learning and achieving. Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and are eager to take part in all activities. Their attendance is in line with the national average. They are polite, well behaved and speak with pride about their work. Pupils learn very well about keeping safe and healthy.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

With strong support from teaching assistants, teachers use their detailed knowledge of what pupils have learned previously, in order to provide them with activities pitched at just the right level to enable them to learn well. For instance, during an English lesson, higher attaining Year 3 pupils wrote reports independently about Easter and Eid-ur-Fitr, whilst a group with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or in the very

early stages of learning English were helped to compose and say simple sentences as they looked at a picture of children in a classroom.

Lessons are interesting and relevant and have, as one Year 6 pupil observed, "a serious part and a fun part". However, occasionally, particular activities are allowed to run on for too long, so pupils find concentration harder. Teachers have a very clear awareness of the school's priorities. For example, they pay close attention to how they cater for boys and pupils who do not speak English as their main language, and give high priority to promoting speaking and listening. Teachers then make sure that they provide suitable activities which develop these skills.

There are well thought out systems to make the most of data collected about the levels at which pupils are working, for instance, to identify those who need extra help and to set targets for all pupils to work towards. In order to evaluate progress more accurately, managers have identified a need to establish a means of measuring the small steps in learning made by pupils who work at very low levels.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is of good quality and has several outstanding features. For instance, a focus on music has led to high standards and significant improvement since the previous inspection. All pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 play a musical instrument. Performing alongside the Hall, Orchestra has made a considerable contribution to their personal development. Where talent is identified, this is nurtured.

Curricular planning is detailed and identifies the support required for all groups of pupils. Conscious of the need to engage boys and improve their achievement, teachers provide activities and resources to motivate them and aid concentration. Children in the Foundation Stage benefit from meaningful activities, with relevant emphasis on language and social development.

The high take-up rate for clubs contributes to pupils' enjoyment and achievement in physical education, the arts and, through the 'ECO' club, their awareness of the need for sustainability. Keeping healthy is encouraged through personal, social and health education and citizenship, science and the programme for physical education.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

An outstanding pastoral system, very strong relationships, and staff's secure knowledge of each pupil, help to ensure that all pupils are cared for extremely well. Child protection procedures are comprehensive.

Very good links with other professionals contribute to the achievement of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Similarly, the involvement of the Bolton Ethnic Minority Achievement Service provides extra help for pupils in the early stages of learning English. In addition, the appointment of a multi-lingual teaching assistant is increasing the confidence and understanding of these pupils very well.

Pupils in Year 6 are prepared very well for transfer to secondary education. The induction programme is carefully structured and pupils get to know staff from the secondary school, for example when being taught French by one of its teachers.

Health and safety are given high priority and the assessment of potential risks is carefully undertaken and any issues addressed quickly. The attractive, high-quality environment provides a haven and contributes considerably to the pupils' feelings of security and enjoyment.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher's outstanding commitment to ensuring that all pupils are embraced by the school and provided with the ingredients needed to meet their particular personal and learning needs, underpins and drives St William's daily life and plans for the future. There are very good systems for finding out how well all aspects of the school are performing, for example in the quality of teaching. The judgements about each of these are accurate and firmly rooted in a wealth of evidence.

Staff, governors, parents and pupils are all consulted and their views contribute to the school's policies, procedures and plans. The senior leadership team plays an important role in gathering the evidence that enables key priorities to be identified, for example, analysing test results so that additional support can be targeted where it is needed most. The governing body enables this to happen by allocating necessary funds for initiatives such as developing the outdoor accommodation for children in the Foundation Stage. Governors fully appreciate that their policy to admit whenever possible, any pupil, regardless of their background or language has had an adverse impact on the school's ability to sustain its previous high levels of success in national test results. They, and the staff, have responded to this challenge very positively. Importantly, the pupils achieve well and the school provides good value for money.

The headteacher ensures that all staff are fully aware of targets and priorities and she maintains a close overview of the success of initiatives such as developments in the provision for music and of how well all pupils are achieving. She has successfully spearheaded the school's good improvement since the previous report and is making certain that it is well able to continue to improve.

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Inspection judgements

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| <i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i> | School Overall | 16-19 |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|

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 | NA |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 1 | NA |
| The quality and standards in foundation stage | 2 | NA |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 2 | NA |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | Yes | NA |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes | NA |

Achievement and standards

| | | |
|--|---|----|
| How well do learners achieve? | 2 | NA |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 3 | NA |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 2 | NA |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 2 | NA |

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs? | 2 | NA |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 2 | NA |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 1 | NA |

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

Leadership and management

| | | |
|--|-----|----|
| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 2 | NA |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 1 | NA |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review | 2 | NA |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 1 | NA |
| How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 2 | NA |
| The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected | Yes | NA |

| | |
|---|-----|
| The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy | |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily | Yes |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise | Yes |
| Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse | Yes |
| Learners are educated about sexual health | Yes |
| The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe | |
| Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements | Yes |
| Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place | Yes |
| Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism | Yes |
| Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them | Yes |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution | |
| Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships | Yes |
| Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them | Yes |
| Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community | Yes |
| The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being | |
| There is provision to promote learners' basic skills | Yes |
| Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams | Yes |
| Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form | NA |
| Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy | NA |

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for being so polite and friendly. We really enjoyed our short time with you.

What we liked most about your school

- You work hard, behave well and are keen to have a go and do your best in lessons and clubs.
- Your teachers and helpers try hard to make sure you all learn well and are safe and happy in school.
- Boys and girls from different races work and play together and respect each other.
- Mrs Babb sees to it that all children are given equal chances to do well in school.
- Your mums and dads think St Williams is a good school and we think so too.

What we have asked your teachers to do now

- Carry on helping the children who don't speak English very well, so they can learn more easily.
- Find ways of showing how well the children who learn slowly are getting on.