



St Francis Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107332
LEA Bradford
Inspection number 277745
Inspection dates 1 February 2006 to 2 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Roger Gill CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Myers Lane
School category	Voluntary aided		Bradford
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		West Yorkshire BD2 4ES
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01274 638 520
Number on roll	355	Fax number	01274 638 520
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Philip Shackleton
Date of previous inspection	18 March 2002	Headteacher	Mr Peter Gibbons

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large school in an average socio-economic area of Bradford. The majority of children are of white British heritage, with a small group from minority ethnic heritages. A few children are learning English as an additional language; none is currently at an early stage. A broadly average proportion of children have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Most children start school with skills and knowledge typical for their age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. Children achieve well because teaching is successful. Progress has been rapid since the school was last inspected in 2004 and dramatic since 2002 when children's achievements were unsatisfactory. This has been accomplished by tenacious leadership from the headteacher, helped by the entire team of staff. The quality of teaching has improved greatly. Inspectors agree with the school's evaluation of itself and that it is providing good value for money. Parents acclaim the school's success and rightly applaud a greater involvement in their children's learning. The Foundation Stage provision is good; children progress well and the majority reach the expected levels by the end of Reception. The school's positive climate results in good personal development. A caring spirit throughout the school is tangible. One child wrote to the headteacher echoing the thoughts of others, 'Thank you for being so special. you help us all the time.'

Leadership and management are good and the school is well placed to make more improvements. The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher and an effective governing body, has introduced an excellent system of self-review that has transformed the quality of teaching and learning. A great deal has been accomplished to make the curriculum exciting and relevant, but there is more to do still in terms of streamlining the content of subjects such as history. Children's learning is analysed closely and they are beginning to be involved in thinking about their performance, but even more could be done in this respect.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the degree to which children are actively involved in the pursuit of their academic targets.
- Complete the process of devising a manageable curriculum that is exciting and which allows time to study in depth.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. Children meet or exceed the targets set for them because teaching is quick to spot how progress could be better. This applies to children of all levels of attainment. There is a trend for children to enter the nursery with broadly average knowledge and skills, but often with weaknesses in personal development and the early stages of reading and writing. The good progress that children make in the Foundation Stage ensures that these aspects, and all others, are developed well. Pupils reach above average standards by the end of Year 6. In 2005, children made satisfactory progress to reach these standards, but this year, owing to even better teaching, progress is good. It is a feature of the school's rapid improvement that children's achievements are consistently good throughout the school. Where children's writing, for example, was a weakness it is now strong throughout the school. Standards in information and communication technology meet expectations and this represents good progress

because children's education was hampered by inadequate computers until this year. Pupils progress soundly in other subjects; they make spurts of progress when the curriculum is particularly exciting, for example, in the Arts Week when a Flower Project resulted in some visually stunning pieces.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

These are good aspects. Children enjoy their lessons and this is reflected in their good attendance and punctuality. Attitudes and behaviour are good and sometimes outstanding. For example, during a stimulating school assembly with a moral theme, they displayed excellent attitudes and appropriate reverence. One could hear a pin drop as they left the hall.

The very effective Job Club in Year 6 provides pupils with an early taste of the world of work, by virtue of the need for an application and interview. If successful, they take on valuable responsibilities around the school. The school council takes its role seriously. Its decisions encourage children to eat healthily and to take regular exercise; fresh fruit is available every day. Pupils are encouraged to keep the school tidy. One child on being shown a bag full of litter collected from around the school, exclaimed that, 'it was horrible!' These examples indicate how committed children have become to health, safety and environmental matters.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. The school's Catholic ethos underpins pupils' spiritual development successfully and they are provided with many opportunities to study and understand the cultural diversity of world faiths, which broadens their horizons well.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good teaching results in good learning. Successful lessons go like clockwork because children are keen and very well behaved. Snappy introductions leave enough time for children to discuss with others and enjoy practical activities that cement their understanding. Grouping by attainment from Year 1 to Year 6 plays a strong role in raising standards. Moreover, teachers rightly value the contribution of teaching assistants. Their support ensures that children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are taught well. The quality of teaching is augmented by specialist staff from a local college, for example in physical education. This adds zest to lessons, which particularly motivates boys. A small amount of teaching lacks the drive found elsewhere in the school. In these lessons, learning is satisfactory, but pupils are not engaged actively enough to achieve their best.

The assessment of children's work is accurate and the findings are collated very well. Teachers know what improvements need to be made and they have gone some way to inform children of these. However, regular marking, annual reports, and daily

conversation in most lessons do not equip children fully with the skills of self-evaluation. By contrast, teaching in the Foundation Stage often involves children superbly in a consideration of how well they have done.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has a good curriculum that includes enrichment in music, drama and sport. For example, children in Year 5 bubbled with enthusiasm when asked to devise a 'Break Dance' in a special session in physical education. Lessons in writing are sometimes magical because subdued lighting and mood music encourage deeper concentration. In the Foundation Stage, the newly improved outdoor zone is already being used for all types of learning, which broadens the scope of the already good curriculum. There are well planned activities to suit all children including those with learning difficulties or with particular gifts and talents; learning is often enlivened by visitors. Pupils learn well about leading healthy, safe lives in the lessons devoted to personal development. In some subjects there is too much to study and learning becomes rushed. The school has made a good start at trimming and re-organising the content, but there is more to do yet.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care is a strong aspect of the school and as a result children achieve well both academically and personally in this safe and encouraging environment. Staff know children very well and are quick to notice any worries they may have, lending a listening ear if necessary. Procedures for child protection are in place and are working well. Regular risk assessments ensure that health and safety matters are treated well: the new perimeter fence, for example, helps children to feel safe. Good systems have been established to help children with learning difficulties and other needs. There is a strong team approach within the school and with outside organisations. Parents are consulted well and this communication enhances their children's learning. Academic progress is carefully monitored to identify the next steps in learning, but the school is yet to make children fully aware of what these are. This unfinished work limits the help and support available.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good, but the way that the school's performance, in particular children's learning, has been analysed to improve standards is first-rate. The headteacher's sense of direction and purpose is crystal clear. His thoughtful, calm and sharply insightful manner has created a culture of inclusion and success. This has inspired others; all staff and governors play their part admirably. Standards have improved considerably since the last inspection in conjunction with continued improvements in the quality of teaching and the training of subject leaders.

Self-evaluation is accurate in all aspects and takes into account the views of staff, parents and children. Information is analysed superbly to highlight where improvements are needed. For example, the weaknesses in pupils' writing have been tackled well and progress is now good. Moreover, there is a strong focus on promoting children's personal development as well as their academic attainment. This has resulted in a safe and healthy environment, despite the remaining shortcomings in the accommodation.

The school monitors the quality of teaching effectively to identify its strengths and relative weaknesses. There is good use of teaching assistants to help improve pupils' learning. Subject leaders are now involved well in the process of review and display good skills of analysis. Nevertheless, they judge correctly that there is unfinished work in their task of re-organising the curriculum. Governance is good; governors are now firm partners in school improvement. They give a high priority to ensuring that standards and achievement are improving, but equally that children are safe and healthy.

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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	16-19
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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	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	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	2	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?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	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?	2	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	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	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 your help when we inspected your school. We thoroughly enjoyed our visit because everyone was so helpful and friendly. We would like to share with you what we thought.

These are some of the things that we enjoyed:

- the way that the quality of your work is improving
- the exciting extras on your timetable such as Break Dancing
- your attitudes to work and school in general
- the way the school cares for you which makes you all feel included.

We know everyone wants to do even better and we have suggested some things that we think will help:

- I would like your teachers to look even closer at the progress you are making and involve you more in discussing how well you are doing and what still needs to be improved
- your teachers should complete their reorganisation of the curriculum, in order for you to spend more time on some of the exciting things on the timetable and to sharpen up your study skills.

Best wishes to you all. We hope you continue to have a wonderful time at school.