



St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Huddersfield

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107750
LEA Kirklees
Inspection number 277833
Inspection dates 14 September 2005 to 15 September 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs Lesley Clark CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	George Avenue
School category	Voluntary aided		Birkby
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD2 2BJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01484 300800
Number on roll	373	Fax number	01484 300808
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Rev. McGillicuddy
Date of previous inspection	14 February 2000	Headteacher	Mr Tony Parker (Acting)

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 14 September 2005 - 15 September 2005	Inspection number 277833
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This large Catholic primary school is located in a residential area on the edge of Huddersfield but pupils also come from much further afield. Pupils' backgrounds are mostly socio-economically average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties (20%) is slightly above average. Although the majority of pupils are white, the number from minority ethnic heritages and from other European countries, including those from refugee and asylum seeking families, has been increasing steadily. More pupils (currently 8%) are at a very early stage of speaking English than in the past, the most common languages spoken being Polish, Italian and Somali. The attainment of children joining the school in the Foundation Stage is broadly average. A sizeable number of children have less than three full terms in the reception class. Although the school has enjoyed considerable stability in staffing over time, there have been significant staffing difficulties at both class teacher and senior management level (illness, absence and short-term supply cover) in the past three years. The headteacher and deputy retired at the end of August, 2005. Currently, the school is led and managed by an acting headteacher from another school and a member of staff who has been acting as deputy for the past year. The school's self-evaluation was completed under the former leadership and management team.

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 which gives good value for money. The inspectors agree with the school's overall evaluation of its effectiveness. The small number of issues raised in the last report has been tackled satisfactorily and, despite considerable staffing problems, the school has maintained its high standards. It has strong links with parents and the local and wider church communities. Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is excellent. There is a comprehensive range of extra-curricular activities for pupils of all ages and pupils feel they have a say in what goes on. They thoroughly enjoy all the school has to offer and their attendance is excellent. Good teaching ensures that children make good progress in the Foundation Stage but limited resources coupled with the fact that many children have less than three terms in the Foundation Stage, result in standards being average overall on entry to Year 1. Pupils reach good standards in the rest of the school as a result of their well-rounded education. Teaching and learning are good and pupils with special educational needs and those who have limited spoken English are supported well.

The school's leadership and management are satisfactory at present. The transitional stage of leadership and management has highlighted the fact that the school currently lacks some of the necessary systems to ensure continuity and further improve standards. The acting headteacher and deputy have rightly identified that the roles and responsibilities of subject leaders need to be clarified and that the informal assessment systems do not yet give a clear enough picture of progress of different groups of pupils as they move through the school. The strong teamwork and enthusiastic teaching mean the school is well placed to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Better define the roles and responsibilities of subject leaders
- Gather clear information, systematically, to provide an overview of how well pupils do as they progress through the school
- Develop the indoor and outdoor resources in the Foundation stage to give more children more opportunities to make progress through play throughout the day

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school's view that standards are consistently good in English, mathematics and science. Results in 2005 confirm continuing good standards and pupils in Year 6 are likely to achieve the challenging targets set for them. Children enter the Foundation Stage with broadly average levels of ability and make good progress though not all achieve the levels expected by the start of Year 1 largely because they do not have a full three terms in reception and the resources for indoor and outdoor play are limited. Standards are average overall in all areas of learning at the end of the reception year. Pupils make good progress throughout their time in

school and results in national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 show this. All pupils do well in relation to the level at which they start with the vast majority meeting the level expected of their age and a large number exceeding national expectations. Standards are generally above average (and often better) because of consistently good teaching and good planning in each year group and a strong element of fun and enjoyment shared by staff and pupils alike. Pupils are active learners; they soak up the technical vocabulary and relish the investigative activities which are hallmarks of the teaching of science where standards are particularly strong. Pupils with learning difficulties, or who are just beginning to learn English, make equally good progress because of the effective support they are given.

While it is highly likely that all pupils are doing as well as they should, the school has limited data to track the progress of groups of pupils and is reliant mainly on individual teacher's assessments and national test results to give the measure of success of, for example, higher attaining pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Inspectors disagree with the school's evaluation of satisfactory; this aspect of pupils' education is outstanding. The personal development and well-being of pupils are nurtured very well. Pupils throughout the school show high levels of interest in their work and older pupils set a very good example to younger ones. For example, Year 2 pupils look after reception pupils at lunchtime, showing high levels of care and concern as they help them to choose a healthy lunch, chatting and holding their hands to put them at their ease. Pupils have the confidence to make suggestions as to how to improve their school because they know they will be listened to. They are involved in fund-raising activities which give them an awareness of the wider world communities. Older pupils prepared a successful bid to redevelop part of the school grounds. Relationships are harmonious, including those between different ethnic groups. One reason why pupils just learning to speak English make good progress is because of the practice their friends give them. Bullying and racism are rare and any such incidents are dealt with swiftly and effectively. A strong feature of the school is the way it helps pupils to lead healthy lifestyles through a rich and varied programme of sporting activities.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The Catholic ethos of the school not only helps pupils to develop an awareness of their own and others' beliefs but underpins all that they do, supported by prayer and reflection. Pupils mirror the adults' exemplary attitudes, gaining an appreciation of the fullness and diversity of life in a multi-cultural society. Attendance is outstanding and is a clear measure of how much pupils enjoy school and love all it offers them.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Inspection evidence matches the school's view that teaching and learning are good and confirms some exceptional teaching in Years 2 and 6. A key strength is the way teachers plan together so that pupils in different classes in the same year group receive an equally good deal. This is also used successfully to develop the expertise of newly qualified staff or those new to the school as they work in partnership with a more experienced teacher to their mutual benefit. It is the main reason why standards have remained above average during the recent disruptions caused by staff illness and absence.

There is much strength in the diversity of teaching styles and the spirited way in which teachers make learning fun. For example, Year 3 pupils rapidly learnt how to measure accurately while giggling at their teacher's deliberate mistakes. Expectations of pupils' work and behaviour are high. Teachers' questioning is also good and successfully combines extending pupils' knowledge of technical terms with giving them the chance to use them, as in a very good Year 6 science lesson. Pupils have good opportunities to discuss ideas with a partner or to demonstrate what they have learnt to others. Teachers and teaching assistants work hard with those with learning difficulties or just starting to speak English, enabling them to make good progress.

Lessons were seen at the start of the school year when teachers were getting to know their pupils; nonetheless, most lessons were challenging and moved at a swift pace. Marking is good and points out what needs to be improved.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets the needs and interests of all pupils well. It is broad and balanced, and all statutory requirements are met. The school's self evaluation regards its curriculum as satisfactory. This modest assessment reflects the fact that not all subject leaders have an informed knowledge of what is being covered throughout the school. The inspectors judge the curriculum to be good because it promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and creative development well with high levels of enjoyment. The school is well placed to respond positively to the recent national initiative for schools to widen their curriculum. Work in the classrooms is enriched by many visitors to the school; for example, Year 6 pupils were writing enthusiastically their own openings to stories bearing in mind advice from an author who had talked to them the day before. The curriculum for older pupils includes French, and a French Caf, experience is enjoyed by Year 5 each year. Pupils are encouraged to adopt a healthy and safe lifestyle; the personal, social, health and citizenship programme, together with support from outside agencies, is developing this further. The broad range of activities available to all pupils after school, including many different sports as well as music and computing further enrich provision. The impressive playground games and the wildlife garden were

designed by pupils and form a valuable resource. There are good links with many local organisations, and pupils take part in many church and community activities. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties is good and enables them to achieve well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school has a good, caring, family feel which children say makes them feel happy and valued and able to talk to staff when they are troubled or upset. Child protection procedures in place and all members of staff are fully aware of them. Children who find their learning hard are given good quality help and enjoy learning as much as the rest. The help given to refugee children matches the good quality of that given to others. There are good procedures for helping pupils who join the school during the academic year. As a result, new arrivals, including those who have limited spoken English, settle quickly and grow in confidence. At present, the school assumes all pupils are working and achieving as well as they could, based on consistently good results in national tests and experienced class teachers' assessments and predictions but there are limited systems to check that this is the case. Health and safety procedures are well established and there are good links with outside agencies, which give a range of help to those pupils who require it. Parents and carers feel welcome in school, and the school encourages them to be involved in their children's education through termly parent/teacher consultation evenings and fortnightly newsletters, contrary to the perception of a small minority of parents.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

At the end of the summer term 2005, the school evaluated its leadership and management as good. The inspection team agrees there are undeniable strengths in the shared planning in each year group, committed teaching and in the strong Catholic ethos which nurtures learning with enjoyment, enabling pupils to maintain their good progress. However, the present transitional phase of leadership has revealed some underlying and inherited limitations, namely intermittent leadership and management of subjects and lack of coherence in the systems to check pupils' progress. These inherited factors have made it difficult to get to grips with precisely how well pupils are doing and whether some could in fact do even better and make excellent progress, for example. Therefore, leadership and management are satisfactory. Given that the school is managing a difficult transitional phase very well and the acting headteacher, strongly supported by the acting deputy, has quickly established what needs to be done, the school has good capacity for improvement.

The roles and responsibilities of subject leaders are not clearly defined and although effective subject support is given, such as that to reverse the dip in results in writing in Year 2 two years ago, management systems are informal and based on immediate need. This undoubtedly works in the short term but places a greater responsibility on individual staff members. Subject leaders and key stage managers have had little or

no management time in which to monitor teaching and learning regularly. Although standards have been well maintained, it is noticeable as in science, that when an extra push is given in terms of subject leadership and management, standards soar. Similarly, the procedures to give clear information about how well pupils are doing and the use of the information to track the progress of different groups of pupils are unsystematic. While this worked well with an experienced staff who had worked together for a long time, the system is less effective when new teachers, including newly qualified teachers, are introduced into the school. The school knows broadly how well it is doing, but does not gather and present information about children's performance sufficiently systematically to make the most of this process. The school has a good understanding of its strengths and areas for development and strong teamwork to ensure its success.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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
--	-----------------------	--------------

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	3	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?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	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?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	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 welcoming us to your school and for being so courteous and friendly. We enjoyed our visit and want to share with you what we thought about your school.

What we liked most about your school:

- We think that you are taught well and that your teachers go out of their way to make lessons interesting and fun
- We are pleased that you all get on so well together and we liked the way you helped design the wildlife gardens and invented games to play on your special games pitch
- We think you have an interesting range of extra activities and that there is a lot going on both during and after school
- Your acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher know how to make your school even better
- Your parents and carers are pleased that you come to this school

What we have asked your school to do now:

- We want your teachers to take charge of different subjects and have some time to check what works well and what could be improved
- We want to make your teachers' lives easier by sorting out how the school records your progress so the information can be used to help you learn
- Lastly, we think that the children in reception could do with more toys and play equipment so they have lots to choose from

We liked meeting you and watching you learn and wish you well for the future.