

Longridge St Wilfrid's Roman Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119636
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	313367
Inspection date	14 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Lynne Read

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	112
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Gerry McComb
Headteacher	Mr John McHugh
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2004
School address	St Wilfrid's Terrace Longridge Preston Lancashire PR3 3WQ
Telephone number	01772 782394
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement, standards, teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage and both key stages; pupils' attitudes and behaviour; the breadth of the curriculum in meeting all needs; health and safety and safeguarding procedures; and the quality and impact of leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from: observations; assessment data; records and documents including the school's self-evaluation, parents' replies to the questionnaires, and discussions with staff, governors and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized primary school situated in a rural area close to Preston in Lancashire. Pupils come from mixed backgrounds; the proportion claiming free school meals is below average. The vast majority of pupils are of White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. Extended provision includes full day care for pre-school children as well as before and after-school clubs on the premises.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St Wilfrid's Roman Catholic Primary is a good school and pupils' personal development is outstanding. The school provides good value for money. Parents have very positive views of the school and appreciate the small class sizes. Comments received include praise for the 'very supportive and helpful staff' and the 'high expectations and standards'. Links with the church, the community and other schools are good and result in many benefits for pupils learning and their personal development.

Standards are significantly above average by Year 6. Achievement is good overall although it varies between age groups. Records show that pupils' attainment is typical for their age on entry to Year 1 and they make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1. Standards in the Year 2 teacher assessments are broadly average. In Key Stage 2 progress is rapid, enabling pupils to make up for the lack of rigour in their previous learning and to be well equipped for the next phase of education. Under the direction of the new headteacher, major changes have been made in order to improve progress in Key Stage 1. These include added time allocation and a sharper focus on literacy and numeracy, higher teacher expectations and better use of assessment to plan work that is challenging. Evidence from lessons, books and reliable records show good progress over the current school year with pupils on track to achieve the targets set by their teachers. However, there are fewer Year 2 pupils exceeding the level expected for their age than could be expected. The established good provision in Key Stage 2 has been enhanced and the good progress maintained. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. The school keeps a watchful eye on the learning of boys and girls and works hard to ensure that topics and books interest them both.

Pupils are currently making good progress because they are taught well. They strive hard and persevere. New targets for learning are very effective because pupils know what they need to do to improve. The information from regular assessments is used effectively to provide good support and challenge for pupils in Key Stage 2. This is largely the picture in Key Stage 1 but there is scope to inject further challenge for the more able pupils. Improvements to enhance teaching and learning have been introduced but are not all fully embedded. Marking is sometimes excellent, telling pupils precisely how well they have done. However, this is not the case in all classes. Increasingly, pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own progress and consider the next steps. This promotes independent learning very effectively but the practice is not consistent across school.

The good curriculum is another important factor underpinning pupils' progress. Lessons provide a good balance in developing pupils' creative, physical, practical and personal skills, as well as their academic learning. Pupils say they especially enjoy the investigative work in science and their history lessons that include role play. Opportunities for pupils to consolidate literacy skills are frequent; those for practising computer skills are satisfactory and developing. Special teaching programmes are successful in supporting those pupils who are not making expected progress. An exciting range of themed days and weeks, alongside visits and expert visitors, enhance the curriculum and help to make learning fun. Pupils appreciate the wide selection of after school activities for pupils of all ages to try out new experiences and extend their talents. They are especially enthusiastic about the 'mad science' and knitting clubs.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. It is supported very well by the school's religious foundation

and an excellent programme of personal education. Attendance is excellent. Pupils have a strong identity with St Wilfrid's and the school prayer, developed as a collaborative project, illustrates this well. Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school and behaviour is excellent. Older pupils demonstrate very good self-discipline and have a strong work ethic. Excellent attention is given to care and support for personal development, and academic guidance is good. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements. Therefore, pupils feel very secure and say that there is no bullying. Their views are taken very seriously. The headteacher invites different pupils to be his 'VIP guests' when they discuss work and school life generally. Pupils fully understand the principles of healthy living; they take good advantage of the wide range of sporting and physical activities provided. There is a strong community spirit in school with pupils helping others and taking on responsibilities, such as being buddies and members of the school council. These activities, together with good basic skills, prepare pupils exceptionally well for future education and work.

Leadership and management are good. New records track pupils' progress closely and provide a reliable source for checking the performance of the school. Self-evaluation is accurate. A focused school improvement plan highlights priorities and includes clear direction for staff. The headteacher provides good and enthusiastic leadership. In the short time since his appointment, he has gained the confidence and respect of staff, governors and parents. The school provides a stimulating environment for learning; administration is very effective and there are high quality displays of pupils' work. These factors reflect the shared sense of pride among all adults at the school and their commitment to providing the best for the pupils. Governance is good and all statutory requirements are met. Governors have a detailed overview of standards and achievement and bring a good range of expertise and experience to enhance management. They take an active and critical role in monitoring the school's work. Good improvements have been made over the last year, especially in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. These are resulting in good progress but in the short time span, have not yet made an impact on standards at Year 2. Nevertheless, the school has good capacity for future improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Many improvements have taken place in the Foundation Stage recently in order to raise achievement beyond the satisfactory level of previous years. The revised curriculum ensures that children have inviting activities where they practise and consolidate the new skills they are learning. The 'free choice' time encourages children to explore and investigate but more could be made of the outdoor learning environment. Teaching is good. The adults work well together to assess progress and plan tasks that move children's learning on at a good pace. New arrangements for teaching sounds and letters are proving to be highly successful in boosting early reading and writing skills. From a typical starting point on entry to the Foundation Stage, pupils are making good progress this year. The vast majority are on track to achieve the expected learning goals with a significant number well on the way to exceeding them. Children's personal development is a strength. Behaviour is very good; children thoroughly enjoy their work and collaborate well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the proportion of pupils exceeding the level expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2.

- Extend the best systems for marking work and pupils' self-evaluation to all classes.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

15 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Longridge St Wilfrid's Roman Catholic Primary School, Lancashire, PR3 3WQ

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school. I thoroughly enjoyed my day. I appreciated all the help you gave me and the interesting conversations we had. In return, I would like to tell you what I found out.

St Wilfrid's Roman Catholic Primary is a good school. Some of the main things that impressed me were your excellent behaviour, your willingness to work hard, and your friendliness. You get on very well together and take very good care of each other. You are a credit to your school and families. Your school council members ensure that your views are known and are good at putting your case forward. Additionally, the notes posted to 'Worry Wilf' and 'Ideas Wilf' ensure that adults know your problems and suggestions. Your headteacher agrees with your number one priority and is trying to find some extra cash for the work to be done. I think you do a good job in raising money. It's good to know that while you use some for your projects, you also give a good deal to charities. It shows you are good citizens and care about those who are less fortunate in the world.

The school is a safe and happy place and, you say, adults 'make you feel welcome and always listen to you'. It is good to know that bullying does not happen although 'friends fall out sometimes'. Please thank your parents for sending lots of replies to the questionnaire. They are very pleased with the school and like the new, exciting things that have been happening recently.

You are keen to learn and are making good progress. I think that some of the Key Stage 1 pupils would benefit from even harder work to boost progress a bit further. I am sure you will enjoy stretching your brains. In Key Stage 2, some of you are becoming independent learners by checking your own work and identifying what needs improving. Well done! It would be good if all classes worked in this way. Your school will be providing more detailed feedback when marking your work.

Thank you once again for the interesting conversations I had and for letting me share your day. There is a great deal about your school of which you and the staff can be proud. Please accept my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Lynne Read

Lead inspector