

All Saints Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132208
Local Authority	Sefton
Inspection number	315967
Inspection dates	25–26 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Gordon Alston

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	380
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fr Gerry O'Shaugnessy
Headteacher	Mr Stephen Sanderson CBE
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Chesnut Grove Bootle Merseyside L20 4LX
Telephone number	0151 922 2440
Fax number	0151 933 7883

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This above average sized school admits pupils from Bootle, an area that has significant social and economic disadvantage, close to Liverpool docks. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is high when compared to other schools. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. There are a very small number of pupils from minority ethnic heritages. The school was central in a programme of school closures. It opened in January 2007 after the amalgamation of two primary schools. At present it is located on two sites half a mile apart. One of the schools is on a site that is being demolished to make way for the new school.

All Saints Primary has gained Investors in People status and a number of awards including Healthy Schools, Activemark and International School. It is also involved in a number of local and national initiatives.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

All Saints is a good school with outstanding features, providing good value for money. Very effective leadership has ensured that pupils continue to receive a good quality education despite a period of immense upheaval. This is a very inclusive school in which the dedication and devotion of the headteacher and staff to meeting the needs of every child is outstanding. As a result, it is a very happy, purposeful place where pupils develop well on all fronts. Parents' strong support for this view is shown in a typical comment, 'All Saints is at the heart of the community, raising aspirations, improving life chances and putting pupils and families at the forefront of all they do.'

Pupils have an exceptional enjoyment of school. Their behaviour is excellent and they get on very well with each other and their teachers. They are very keen to learn because good teaching provides them with interesting tasks and activities to challenge them. Pupils have the confidence to ask and answer questions because teachers are skilled both in managing pupils' behaviour and in encouraging them to participate fully in lessons. However, the quality of teachers' marking and the feedback they give to pupils on their work varies. As a result, pupils are not always clear on how to improve their work.

Pupils achieve well. Most children enter school with well below average levels of knowledge and skills for their age. They get off to a successful start in Reception, through carefully planned learning. However, most children do not reach the expected levels by the end of their first year although they are well prepared for life in school. Pupils continue to make good progress through Key Stages 1 and 2, reaching standards which are below average by the end of Year 2 and average by the end of Year 6.

Pupils talk enthusiastically about the rich range of activities taking place in and out of lessons. The pupils have an exceptional understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle and are very safety conscious. They make an outstanding contribution to the school community, for example, through the school council, which helps with aspects of school life such as designing the new school uniform. Pupils have a very good understanding of cultural diversity through very good links with five schools in other parts of the world. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education because of the school's successful concentration on developing their basic skills.

The quality of care is outstanding and the school has good procedures to monitor pupils' progress. The outstanding links with parents, the local community and outside agencies provide excellent support for pupils. The school goes out of its way to implement ideas suggested by pupils and parents. For example, there have been fundraising activities to support charities, a friendship seat and projects to encourage gifted pupils to share and develop their talents with other pupils. Rigorous and expert management has been central in creating a well focused team approach as evidenced in the smooth day-to-day running of two sites in the midst of major building work. The commitment of a conscientious headteacher promotes good academic and excellent personal development for all pupils. The school has an excellent capacity to improve as demonstrated by its outstanding quality of self-evaluation and, for example, the rapidly improving progress in Key Stage 2. Governors support and challenge the school exceptionally well and have developed very strong community links.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

On entry to Nursery, children's skills and knowledge are well below those expected of three-year-olds. They make good progress, especially in language and personal and social education, because their learning is carefully tailored to develop their basic skills. However, many do not reach expected levels in all areas of learning. Classes are happy places where children enjoy their learning and achieve well. Parents say their children settle quickly because of good induction arrangements, including a home visit, help children to feel secure. Outstanding relationships create a supportive environment in which children can thrive. Staff strike a good balance between leading the learning and providing opportunities for children to make choices. Children have time to explore things that interest them and to develop the independence to be confident learners. Staff keep a close track of each child's progress and use this information well to plan what children need to learn next. A new leader is successfully ensuring that there is consistency of provision between classes.

What the school should do to improve further

- Share the good practice in the marking and feedback some pupils get from teachers on their work to ensure that all pupils know how they can improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Most children enter school with skills well below those expected for their age. They leave having reached broadly average or better standards. This represents good achievement overall. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils build well on their earlier learning to reach standards in reading, writing and mathematics which are below average, but which represent good achievement. In 2007, Year 6 test results in English and in mathematics were broadly average. Up-to-date assessment data indicate that pupils' progress during Key Stage 2 has been improving well and is now good. The data also shows an improvement in the proportions of pupils reaching levels which are average or better. New comprehensive tracking of pupils' progress enables strengths and weaknesses in their achievement to be identified early. Appropriate intervention strategies are effective in raising achievement. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also make good progress, due to effective support from staff.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils feel very safe, they thoroughly enjoy school and most attend well. They talk enthusiastically about their favourite activities and display very positive attitudes to learning. Pupils are very friendly and polite, and their behaviour is impeccable. Relationships are excellent. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. The day-to-day life of the school and the curriculum, including links with schools in Sierra Leone and China, give pupils a strong understanding of themselves and their place in the wider world. As pupils said, 'We're raising £1500 to build a well so that children in our partner school don't have to walk a mile to get water.' This reflects a deep understanding and care for others. The school has an Activemark award for its commitment to sport and is recognised as a Healthy School. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school community through many extra responsibilities

and the respect they show for each other and their teachers. Well developed academic and personal skills give them a good foundation for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well because the quality of teaching is consistently good across the school. Teachers' very caring relationships with pupils generate very positive attitudes to learning. Their strong subject knowledge, conscientious planning and sensitive questioning ensure that pupils clearly understand tasks. Very good class management and stimulating environments contribute to pupils' enjoyment of learning. Teachers and classroom assistants work well together to support pupils in their learning. Teachers assess pupils' progress accurately and in the best lessons they use assessment information well to ensure that work is well matched to the needs of all pupils. While pupils are very eager to reach their personal targets, the usefulness of written comments by teachers in their marking on how to improve varies. For example, targets are not always written in ways that pupils can understand. Consequently, pupils are not always clear on how to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is unique; it successfully motivates and inspires pupils, providing a very rich range of experiences for them. The strong focus on literacy and numeracy ensures that there are good links between subjects that promote basic skills. The curriculum is enriched through the very strong links it has with five partner schools throughout the world. These links give deep-felt experiences as can be seen in pupils' reaction after visits to China and Hungary. A trip to Belgium to experience war sites and graves was a source of inspiration and motivation. The curriculum makes a very good contribution to the fitness of pupils not only through physical education but also through a very wide range of extra clubs and coaching opportunities. In addition, there is a wide range of activities other than sports that contribute to pupils' personal development, for example, drama and art clubs as well as residential experiences. Pupils enthuse about the many visits and visitors they have and how this makes their learning fun and exciting. Pupils learn languages including Spanish and Mandarin.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Outstanding systems to promote the personal development of pupils are key strengths of the school. A typical parental comment, 'The school always goes the extra mile', is a fine summary of the school's approach. For example, the school strongly supports its pupils, through several initiatives, such as the learning mentor and family workers. Pupils' emotional development is also supported very well through specific teaching programmes. The tracking of pupils' personal and academic progress is good. It identifies pupils in need of additional support and, as a result, all groups of pupils achieve their potential. Outstanding support for vulnerable pupils, drawing well on links with outside agencies, ensures that they learn well. For example, nurture groups give some pupils a much needed boost to their self-esteem. All aspects of child protection fully meet legal requirements.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The outstanding quality of leadership and management is shown in the way the school has coped exceptionally well under the prevailing difficult circumstances in which it is working. The potential disruption to learning caused by the amalgamation of two schools alongside a loss of space and facilities due to major building work has not happened. This is due to the very effective organisation of these changes. Leaders have also ensured that, through very good teamwork, the very positive environment for pupils' learning has been sustained. There has been very good success in boosting pupils' achievement through more consistently good teaching and learning which have raised standards significantly. Very rigorous monitoring and sharing good practice have been instrumental in this improvement. Self-evaluation is outstanding and gives the school a clear basis for improvement. Very challenging whole-school targets strongly promote pupils' achievement and have resulted in improving standards. Governors discharge their responsibilities exceptionally well, contributing strongly to the school's ongoing development, particularly in helping to maximise its contribution to the community.

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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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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	2
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	2

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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
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	1
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

Inspection of All Saints Catholic Primary School, Bootle, L20 4LX

After spending two days inspecting your school, we want to thank you all so much for making our visit such an enjoyable one. We came to see how well your school is performing and found that All Saints is a good school with outstanding features. You and all the school staff play a very important role in making it like this. Your excellent behaviour and very good relationships are a credit to you all.

We always ask children for their views of the school and one pupil said, 'It's great at All Saints - it's like one big happy family.' That pupil was right; your school is a very caring place. You have a very dedicated headteacher who leads your school very successfully and places your well-being at the centre of all that happens. All the teachers and assistants are keen to make your lessons interesting and you respond well by working hard and learning lots in lessons. The staff also make school enjoyable and exciting with the many visits you go on and lots of visitors to school. The chance of going to China or singing in Hungary must be very exciting. We were also very pleased to see how well you all get on. We saw lots of pupils with responsibilities taking great pride in doing them very well. It was also very pleasing to see all the clubs you have and how much you value your regular exercise, and sport.

Sometimes your teachers might say to you, 'This is good but you could make it even better if you.' Well, I am also saying this to your school. To be even better, it needs to make sure that you all understand how you can improve your work. When teachers mark your work, they all need to make clear to you how you could do better, as I know you are very keen to try and reach your targets.

You may have some ideas of your own which you would like to share with the school on how best the marking and feedback you get can be improved.

Finally, I would like to thank you again and wish you and your teachers every success for the future.