

St Mary's and St Joseph's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118035
Local Authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	326747
Inspection dates	28–29 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Eric Jackson

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	105
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Rowan Blake-James
Headteacher	Mrs Alison Halley
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Maxwell Road Pocklington York North Yorkshire YO42 2HE
Telephone number	01759 303287

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a smaller-than-average school serving a fairly affluent area. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average, as is the number identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Almost all the pupils are White British, with a small number of pupils of White European or mixed heritage. A very small number speak English as an additional language. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision for children of Reception age in a class shared with Year 1 pupils. Other pupils are taught in mixed-age classes.

The school was severely flooded in 2007, and pupils were housed for a half term in the local infant school and the church hall. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2008.

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 with some outstanding features. All required safeguarding and child protection measures are in place. The pupils feel safe and are extremely happy here. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. There is a shared vision for children's learning between parents and the staff which leads to pupils achieving well, and reaching well above average standards in English by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Good partnerships with parents, the parish, other local schools and the local authority contribute well to the quality of provision.

Pupils reach well above average standards overall in mathematics and science. However, although national test results for Year 6 in 2008 in mathematics and science were well above average at the expected Level 4, they were lower than usual at the higher Level 5. The school believes that this is partly the result of disruption from flooding in 2007, causing the school to be evacuated for half a term to another local school and the church hall. Current progress is good across the school in the core subjects, including in mathematics and science. It improved in Years 3 to 6 because there is a sharp focus on all pupils achieving to their capabilities. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with a statement of special educational need are supported well to make good progress in their learning and personal development. There is a focus in staff's planning on ensuring that able, gifted and talented pupils are also identified and challenged to make accelerated progress. Currently, they do, both boys and girls. Pupils' overall progress prepares them well for the next stage in their education. The school has achieved the Basic Skills Award.

The vast majority of parents are fully supportive of the school's provision. They recognise that their children's personal development and well-being are good, and rightly feel that teaching and learning are also good. The staff work well together, and the pupils say that their learning is fun and interesting. One parent summarised what many feel in writing, 'I am very pleased with the whole learning experience my child receives.' The core curriculum of English, mathematics and science is covered well, supported by some good work in music and sport, recognised by the Activemark. However, although the rest of the required curriculum is taught, it is satisfactory overall. There are too few effective links between subjects and although information and communication technology (ICT) is taught, its range is not wide enough. There is effective curricular enrichment through clubs, visits and visitors and a residential experience.

Community cohesion is promoted well. Pupils join in all the school's activities enthusiastically, undertaking such roles as school councillors and 'buddies' in the playground. They make a good contribution to the school and local community, including the parish. They also learn about Islam and Judaism alongside their own faith, and have links with an orphanage in Malawi. Each pupil sends a letter to the children there, and this is discussed together in assembly. Classes 1 and 2 are currently celebrating Chinese New Year to extend pupils' understanding of different cultural festivals. The school is also actively planning links with a school in England with a different cultural heritage to the children here in order to extend their understanding of diversity further.

Care, guidance and support are good. Pupils say that the staff care for them well and that there is always someone there to help when they need it. All lessons begin with a consideration of what pupils can expect to learn, and teachers' marking helps pupils to make further progress. Pupils benefit from the assessment of their work, and are increasingly involved in checking for

themselves how well they have done. Improved monitoring and evaluation systems are used to track whether pupils are achieving as well as they can. The headteacher has also helped staff to put in place new systems to guide pupils to behave well and these are working effectively.

Leadership and management are good, and changes introduced by the headteacher have been welcomed by staff, pupils and parents. She has involved staff and governors fully in determining required developments and has set out with them a clear direction for further improvement. The school's view of itself, in its own evaluation, is accurate. There has been a good response to the headteacher's insistence on setting and achieving challenging targets for learning. Governors are fully involved and keen to maintain the school's deserved reputation for promoting equality of opportunity. There is a spirit of optimism in the school, and its capacity to improve is good. However, governors are rightly concerned about the quality of the school playground and recognise the need to improve this in order to increase pupils' opportunities for play. Overall, the school provides good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Reception children are taught in the same class as some Year 1 pupils. Children generally start in the Reception year with skills, knowledge and understanding above expected levels, especially in communication and language. They achieve well in most areas of learning and many reach well above average standards overall by the time they reach Year 1. The setting is safe and the children's well-being is promoted very effectively. Since the last inspection, the outdoor learning environment has been improved and the children make good use of it in their play. For example, whilst a group learned to buy and sell goods in a 'shop' other groups were swirling through the hanging veils or dressing up for a sleepover in the church! Children develop high-level social and speaking and listening skills in their play in the well organised indoor and outdoor environment. The two part-time teachers cooperate very well to ensure continuity, ably supported by support assistants. Leadership and management are good. New assessment procedures are becoming embedded and the recently introduced curriculum is being implemented effectively.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve overall curricular provision with better links between subjects to raise pupils' achievement in all subjects, including ICT, to match those reached in English, mathematics and science.
- Improve the playground surfaces to increase pupils' opportunities for play.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

There are small numbers in most cohorts so comparisons with national data must be treated cautiously. Overall standards are well above average and achievement is good. Achievement has improved well in Years 1 and 2, building successfully on the good work in Reception. Results at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2008 in reading, writing and mathematics were well above average, a big improvement in mathematics since the last inspection. Current progress is good, and predicted outcomes for 2009 are high. Provisional results in Year 6 in 2008, were well above average in English, mathematics and science, and high at the higher Level 5 in English. Challenging targets were met at Level 4. Progress is currently good, and pupils are predicted to achieve high levels in 2009 national tests. Girls and boys are achieving well. Pupils with

learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, make good progress, as do those identified as able, gifted or talented.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils behave well, take a full part in the life of the school and the local and parish community, enjoy themselves and try hard in lessons. They participate in the spiritual life of the school with joyous reverence, and their singing in assembly is inspiring. Pupils follow the school's moral teaching very well, and understand local, national and wider cultural heritages well for their age. The school has the Healthy School Award and this is evident in the pupils' excellent understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle. They feel safe, and look after one another thoughtfully. They say that there is no bullying, and that they are all friends in a big happy family. This shows in their very good attendance.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. The staff cooperate well together, and support staff are deployed effectively to support different groups or individual pupils. There are good working relationships throughout the school, and pupils respond well to the activities and learning opportunities planned. They are increasingly involved in understanding what they need to do to improve their learning, although teachers do not always provide enough opportunities for pupils to check their own and other's work. The staff plan carefully to meet different pupils' needs, but do not always adapt national planning guidance fully to the circumstances of the school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory, and has good features in English, music and sport. It meets requirements, and the staff in Reception have adopted new national guidance effectively. New materials have been purchased to support learning in mathematics and science that the pupils enjoy, but it is too soon to measure their impact. There have been difficulties with ICT hardware, but the staff do not yet exploit the full range of potential experiences for the pupils. They are keen to develop a more creatively linked curriculum to energise learning across all subjects but this is at an early stage of development. Staff have begun to extend practice guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage into Years 1 and 2.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good and all required safeguarding and child protection measures are in place. Pupils are safe and well cared for across the school. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully included in all the school's activities as far as is possible. Academic guidance in core subjects is good, and pupils are increasingly involved in understanding how to continue to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good, involving all staff effectively. The headteacher has settled in well, and parents, staff and governors are pleased with the improvement measures that have been put in place such as new systems to manage pupils' behaviour and significantly reduced exclusions. There is real clarity in the school's expectations for pupils' achievement both personally and in the core subjects, with high expectations for all of them. The school knows itself well, and the experienced chair of governors, with the rest of the governing body, works well with the school to ensure it is effective. The school is an inclusive and welcoming place, and its contribution to community cohesion is good. The school is well placed to continue to improve.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
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	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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 learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

30 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Mary's and St Joseph's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, East Riding of Yorkshire, YO42 2HE

It was good to meet you and to see how well you get on in your school. Thank you for being friendly and for telling me your views about how effectively you are helped to learn and to grow into good citizens. Please thank your parents for me as their comments in the returned questionnaires helped me in making the required judgements.

I agree with you and your parents that yours is a good school with some outstanding features. Your parents, the staff and you yourselves can take credit for your good behaviour and your excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. You also understand very well how to live healthy lifestyles, and clearly enjoy your time at school. Most of you are on track to reach the highest levels you can because you work hard and follow the staff's guidance in English, mathematics and science.

It was good to see how well you learn in lessons – you certainly know what learning objectives are! You told me that lessons are often fun and exciting, and I enjoyed watching you make instruments, compose your own music, play with floor robots, and buy things in the shop outside. However, I was concerned about how many puddles there are on the playgrounds, and how much mud!

To improve your experience of school further, the staff are thinking about:

- linking ideas for learning between subjects so that you can achieve even better, and making more use of ICT
- how to make the playgrounds better to play on.

With best wishes for your futures!

Yours faithfully

Eric Jackson

Lead inspector