

Thorneyholme Roman Catholic Primary School, Dunsop Bridge

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119689
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	327110
Inspection date	1 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Clive Petts

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)	40
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 Amanda Parker
Headteacher	Mrs Maureen Stansfield
Date of previous school inspection	1 December 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Dunsop Bridge Trough Road Dunsop Bridge Clitheroe Lancashire

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	1 December 2008
Inspection number	327110

Telephone number
Fax number

BB7 3BG
01200 448276
01200 448276

Age group	4-11
Inspection date	1 December 2008
Inspection number	327110

© Crown copyright 2008

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 two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' achievement and the standards they reach at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Years 1 and 2; the quality of teaching and learning; the effectiveness of leadership and management, especially in relation to their impact on pupils' achievement and the effectiveness of EYFS provision. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation, nationally published assessment data, the school's records of pupils' progress, observations of lessons, break and lunchtime, the scrutiny of pupils' work, and the school's priorities for further improvement. Discussions with pupils, staff, the chair of governors and the School Improvement Partner were held and questionnaires returned by parents were taken into account. 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 judgements, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified. These have been included in the report where appropriate.

Description of the school

This is a very small voluntary aided school serving the village and surrounding farms. Almost all the pupils are of White British heritage with a tiny minority at an early stage of learning English. Pupils come from a mixture of socio-economic backgrounds. The take-up of free school meals is low. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is just below average. The school makes provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in a mixed Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 class. Two pupils currently have a statement of special educational need. The school has received Activemark, Healthy Schools and Eco-School awards in recent years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school which gives excellent value for money. The imaginative leadership and management is reflected in the very high standards, excellent achievement, outstanding personal development and the highest quality of care and support. Central to the school's sustained improvement is the cogent vision and direction given by the headteacher, who is skilfully supported by the staff and governors. She displays total commitment to preserving a positive ethos which makes certain that all children are included and thrive in an inspiring, happy and bubbly atmosphere. Parents applaud the school's exceptional family character which is bolstered by its Christian ideals.

Pupils' achievement is excellent. After entering school with broadly average skills, though sometimes with complex learning and language needs, pupils make rapid progress. They maintain their excellent progress, reaching above average standards by the end of Year 2. By the time they leave Year 6, standards are exceptionally high in English, mathematics and science. High proportions of pupils reach higher levels, exceeding their challenging targets. The headteacher has created a climate which balances challenge and support to ensure that all groups of pupils achieve their full potential. Consequently, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the tiny minority learning English for the first time achieve equally well. This is the result of the highly effective support they receive. The pupils' energy, enthusiasm and assured attitudes towards learning are confirmation of the non-stop quest for high achievement. This is reflected in the pattern of high standards, regardless of entry skills, since the last inspection.

The school takes outstanding care of pupils. All staff have an intimate knowledge of their individual needs. Safeguarding procedures are fully in place. Pupils' personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are excellent. Pupils really do love the thought of coming to school and this is reflected in their excellent attendance. They are reluctant to go home even when unwell! Behaviour and attitudes are outstanding. They take responsibility seriously whether joining in school decision making or fastening a younger pupil's coat and explaining how to do it properly. There is a very strong emphasis on mutual respect. Pupils are helpful, polite and display great pride in their school. The positive encouragement and guidance they receive makes them mature, sensible and self-assured. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the varied opportunities they have to lead a healthy lifestyle, for example, growing their own vegetables or using the local farmland for cross country running. Playtimes are active and pupils make excellent use of the secure, open environment and climbing facilities available.

The excellent teaching and learning challenges and motivates pupils to succeed. Learning is thoughtfully planned to cater for the wide array of needs and age range within each group. First-hand learning experiences, for example, visiting the Cooking Bus when it arrives in the village, are used to inspire pupils to excel in their writing and science. Explanations and demonstrations are clear and follow-up questions probing. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are very high and pupils consistently rise to the challenges in lessons. All areas of the school contain vibrant, rich learning environments. Teaching assistants make an outstanding impact on the learning of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or those learning English for the first time. Teachers use assessments very effectively to help pupils' learning. All work is marked systematically and pupils have literacy and numeracy targets that they use to improve their work. Useful classroom displays, oral feedback, self-assessment and written feedback ensure pupils know exactly how to improve.

The curriculum is outstanding and it enriches learning in a variety of imaginative ways, for example, joining partner school pupils from inner city Blackburn on visits to their local mosque or attending a Royal Institute science lecture on 'fizz, foam and flubber' with the local secondary school. 'Wow Week' is used to boost their creative talents in music, art and drama. The school makes an excellent contribution to community cohesion and the extremely close links with the parish and village further add to the richness of pupils' learning. Consequently, pupils are prepared exceptionally well for later life in a demanding and diverse world. Provision for developing pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology is excellent, as is the provision for their personal and emotional development.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The clear vision and quiet determination of the headteacher have ensured sustained development and improvement since the last inspection. She has transformed the building and facilities to meet the demands of a modern curriculum. Staff are totally committed to providing high quality education. Governance is excellent. Governors are central to school improvement and provide much professional expertise. They both hold the school to account for all that it does and provide support and encouragement. Evaluation of strengths and areas for improvement is accurate. Together, senior leaders maintain an outward looking vision for the school. Parents are overwhelming in their praise for the school. They particularly value the sensitively managed, high quality of care for pupils. This all adds up to a school which has an outstanding capacity to continue to sustain improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Provision in EYFS is excellent. Children start school with skills that are typical for their age, although some have complex learning needs. Teaching is excellent. Staff planning is thorough and reflects the intimate knowledge of individual learning needs. As a consequence, children make rapid progress and many achieve beyond the level expected of them. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who are learning English as an additional language are supported exceptionally well to ensure they make at least a similar rate of progress to the other children. Excellent relationships with pre-school settings and parents ensure that children settle quickly and confidently. They are keen to learn and thrive on the range of interesting tasks they are set or can choose, for example, exploring ice patterns on leaves. Children are self-confident and quickly become assured contributors in lessons. Their welfare is especially well promoted. Relationships with staff and each other are exemplary. Children are extremely considerate, for example, when helping others to move safely around the building. The provision is extremely well led and managed. Regular informal assessments accurately check the progress children make. No opportunity is missed to make certain all are included and any barriers that may restrict learning are overcome, for example, working closely with health service professionals to provide early morning physiotherapy sessions for a pupil with disabilities.

What the school should do to improve further

- The school does not have any issues for improvement that it is not already tackling.

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.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
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?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

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

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?	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
The extent to which 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 learners' needs?	1
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

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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Thorneyholme Roman Catholic Primary School, Dunsop Bridge, Lancashire, BB7 3BG

Thank you for making us both so very welcome in your school. We thoroughly enjoyed observing you in lessons, at playtime, joining you for lunch, talking to you and your staff about your school and looking at your work. This is what we thought.

Thorneyholme is an outstanding school. Here are some of the many things we really liked about your school.

- You told us that you really do look forward to the thought of coming to school.
- You told us that you especially enjoy your lessons and value the excellent relationships you enjoy with your staff. We can see why; you have some super staff that make your learning fun yet they challenge you and make you think.
- Your achievement is outstanding and the standards you reach are exceptionally high.
- You behave exceptionally well. You work very hard in lessons and show responsible, considerate attitudes, especially when working with younger pupils.
- Your school staff take exceptional care of you. They are really keen to make sure you are all part of 'one big happy family' who enjoy working together.
- You take responsibility seriously, for example, helping and supporting younger children new to school.
- Your headteacher, governors and staff work remarkably hard to ensure your education is of the highest quality possible.

We are totally confident that your staff know exactly what to do to sustain the improvements they have made. We recognise how much you enjoy your education in such a happy, friendly atmosphere. Thank you for helping with the inspection and best of luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Clive Petts

Lead inspector