

All Saints' Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134250
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	381647
Inspection dates	23–24 April 2012
Lead inspector	Clare Henderson

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 of pupils on the school roll	431
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fr Stephen Maloney
Headteacher	Jeremy Barnes
Date of previous school inspection	8 July 2009
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Introduction

Inspection team

Clare Henderson

Additional Inspector

Maureen Coleman

Additional Inspector

Christine Birchall

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 23 lessons taught by 15 teachers and two teaching assistants, listened to individual pupils reading in Years 1, 2, 4 and 6 and scrutinised pupils' work. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, a representative of the local authority and four groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at documents relating to safeguarding, pupils' progress and attainment and the way in which the school evaluates its own performance. The inspectors scrutinised the questionnaires completed by staff and pupils and analysed the 93 received from parents and carers.

Information about the school

The school is larger than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds; the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The school contains a resourced provision for up to 20 pupils with complex and severe learning difficulties. The percentage of disabled pupils and those supported at school action plus is above average; the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The governing body manages a breakfast and after-school club in the school. The school meets the current floor standards, which set the minimum standards expected by the government.

The school has Healthy School Status, the Basic Skills Quality Mark and is a Fair Trade school. A children's centre is located on the same site and is managed by the governing body. It was subject to a separate inspection carried out at the same time as the inspection of the school and the report will be available on the Ofsted website.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall Effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. It is inclusive and welcoming and promotes outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and enrichment to pupils' learning within the curriculum. The school is not yet outstanding because pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching are not consistently outstanding.
- Children make at least good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and through the rest of the school good progress continues so that pupils' achievement by the end of Year 6 is good. However, in Years 3 to 6 progress sometimes slows in writing and mathematics when pupils, especially the more able, are not challenged. When they leave school in Year 6, pupils' attainment is above average in reading and broadly average in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils show very positive attitudes to learning. They say they feel safe and happy in school. 'I would rather be in school than anywhere else' is a comment typical of the views expressed during the inspection. Pupils show high levels of respect and dignity towards each other and to all adults. Their behaviour around the school and in lessons is good.
- The quality of teaching is good. Exciting activities both within lessons and outside the school day motivate pupils to work hard and make good progress overall in their learning. However, on occasions, the pace of learning slows when assessment information and marking are not used well enough. Furthermore, the opportunities to extend writing skills across the curriculum are not always challenging enough, especially for the more-able pupils.
- Senior leaders and members of the governing body have given high priority to reviewing the school's performance and to improving the quality of teaching and learning. The high regard for the continuing professional development of all staff has enabled staff, often within school holidays, to share their expertise with colleagues world-wide.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the achievement of all pupils and, particularly the more able in Years 3 to 6, to outstanding in writing and mathematics by:
 - making better use of assessment to ensure lessons consistently provide a high level of challenge
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to extend their writing skills across all the subjects of the curriculum
 - ensuring marking consistently provides pupils with the next steps in learning.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make at least good progress from generally below expected starting points. They rapidly learn to work and play independently, with others and with adults. For example, children in the Nursery class were observed investigating and discussing why ice melts, and in the Reception classes they enthusiastically shared, through talk and in writing, the highlights they had enjoyed during the recent visit of giant puppets to Liverpool.

At the previous inspection, boys' attainment in writing in Years 1 and 2 was identified as an area to improve. The school has very effectively addressed this issue and successfully closed the gap. Girls and boys now make equally good and often outstanding progress in writing in Years 1 and 2. Achievement throughout the school is good. A high focus in all classes to develop pupils' understanding and application of letters and sounds has successfully ensured that, by Year 6, attainment for all groups of pupils is above average in reading when compared with similar groups. Attainment is broadly average in writing and mathematics because activities in lessons do not consistently challenge all pupils to gain the higher levels of attainment. Progress in all year groups in reading, writing and mathematics during this school year is good overall and, for a significant minority, particularly in Years 1 and 2, it is outstanding. A high focus on improving reading skills, and a close collaboration with parents and carers is reflected in pupils' above-average attainment in reading in Year 2.

Learning is good in lessons. It is particularly strong when pupils' learning is challenging and thought-provoking. For instance, pupils in Year 2 were able to identify which calculation skills they needed to use to solve number problems whilst some pupils suggested alternative strategies. In a Year 4 information and communication technology (ICT) lesson, all pupils, including those from the resourced provision made outstanding progress as they confidently and successfully followed instructions to complete spreadsheets linked to their class topic on India. A strong focus on promoting pupils' speaking and listening skills throughout the school enables pupils to discuss and refine their ideas for inclusion in their writing effectively. For example, in an English lesson, pupils had to imagine and describe

what was in a 'magical' box presented by the teacher. They enthusiastically shared their ideas explaining their reasoning as they rapidly produced well-structured, thoughtful sentences and, in some cases, high quality paragraphs of writing. There remain, however, some occasions in Years 3 to 6 when a few pupils are not learning as much as they should because assessment information is not used well enough to challenge the more able to achieve the higher levels. Through excellent support and quality provision, disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those from within the resourced provision spend the large majority of lessons working alongside their classmates in classes. Such high quality integration and well-planned learning for this group of pupils ensures they make at least good progress, when compared to similar groups nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Parents and carers share the view that their children make good progress.

Quality of teaching

Parents and carers believe that teaching is good and inspection evidence supports this view. The quality of teaching is consistently good and often outstanding in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. It is less consistently good in Years 3 to 6 where occasionally the more-able pupils are not consistently challenged. In the best lessons, there is a purposeful atmosphere and all pupils are absorbed in their learning and teachers skilfully unpick misconceptions as lessons unfold. In all lessons there are excellent opportunities, which pupils relish, to reflect, discuss and empathise with moral, social and cultural issues.

Interesting, exciting learning is rooted in pupils' real-life experiences. All teachers provide excellent opportunities for pupils to empathise with situations and characters, for example, when reflecting on the events of the Titanic or the feelings of children when evacuated during the Second World War. Listening to different styles of music, reflecting on the composers' thoughts and following this up with their own compositions, for instance, heightens pupils' spiritual and cultural development very effectively. Practical learning involving pupils in reasoning, thinking and discussing their ideas and solutions are features of the outstanding teaching observed. Teachers, including high-quality specialist teachers of music and French, are successful in promoting enjoyment of learning and give pupils the confidence to fail and take risks.

Support staff are extremely attentive to the personal and academic needs of all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. The excellent skills of teaching assistants are used very effectively to support pupils, particularly those from the resourced provision, and this enables them to be fully included in learning in class.

Occasionally, in lessons the pace of learning slows. At these times, pupils lose concentration and low-level disruptions, such as pupils chatting among themselves, or not working at a fast enough pace occur. Furthermore, marking does not always provide pupils with the next steps they need to improve their work.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes to their lessons mean that they are able to learn and thrive. The consistent and clear systems in place and support from all adults help those, who find it difficult to concentrate or to stay on task, to work well with other pupils. Behaviour around the school is typically good. Older pupils act as excellent role models for younger pupils and help them to make the right choices. Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying. They are confident that there is no bullying of any form and that any incidences of behaviour which do not meet the very high expectations of staff are effectively dealt with by the school. Parents and carers do not express any concerns about bullying or feel that their children's learning is being disrupted by poor behaviour. The pupils' views and the school's recording of incidents show that these are managed well and parents and carers are kept well informed.

Pupils are very proud of their school. They say they feel very safe and parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about this aspect of the school's provision. Pupils are very supportive of each other; they work together collaboratively, eager to talk about their learning. The few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds say how much they value the welcome and support they have been given, particularly to help them learn to speak English. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage follow the outstanding lead which all adults provide in how they are to care for and behave towards each other as, for example, they act out being teachers in their play. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, including when using modern technology, and how to respond to any possible internet bullying. Attendance has improved steadily and is broadly average, with evidence of strongly improved attendance for some pupils. The breakfast club, together with the exciting activities in place from 8.30am each day, contributes to improved punctuality for many pupils.

Leadership and management

Senior leaders, in close partnership with staff, identify priorities clearly that will improve the school further. Good progress has been made in response to the school's identification of its weaker areas, as shown by the rise in achievement throughout the school and particularly in writing in Years 1 and 2. This demonstrates the school's clear vision and relentless drive to improve further as they live out their school motto, 'we shine on our own but shine brighter together'.

Staff say how much they value the support they receive and how their planned professional development and opportunities to review this helps them address the school's priorities. Subject leaders have clear ideas about how to improve their subjects and pupils' achievement and are involved with senior leaders, in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. The governing body has a wide range of skills that enables it to give school leaders good challenge, as well as support. It is knowledgeable and well informed and, as a result, is able to monitor the work of the school independently.

The curriculum is good rather than outstanding because pupils, particularly the more able, do not consistently have enough opportunities to apply their writing skills

across all subjects of the curriculum. Visits and visitors enrich the understanding of topics studied and pupils are enthusiastic about these opportunities and the excellent range of extra-curricular activities available. The governing body, senior leaders and staff work effectively to prevent discrimination and ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities to access the full curriculum although the more able are not always challenged enough.

The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development extremely effectively. Numerous opportunities for pupils to reflect on their work, relationships and behaviour are seamlessly woven into learning. Pupils' awareness of the needs of others and respect for diversity, other faiths and cultures are encouraged through curriculum experiences and first-hand links with schools in Newcastle, Belgium and Sierra Leone. Staff share their good practice as, for example, five members of staff spent their holiday time teaching pupils in Sierra Leone and presenting training in the teaching of reading to staff from schools in the neighbouring villages. Excellent partnerships with the children's centre and local schools ensure smooth transition at all stages of the pupils' education. Parents and carers say that they are very well informed about the work of the school. Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements and parents and carers expressed no concerns about their children's safety.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



25 April 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of All Saints' Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School,
Liverpool, L4 2QG**

We really enjoyed our time in your school and two of the highlights for us were hearing you speak French so confidently and talking to so many of you about your experiences at school.

You will be pleased to know that we agree with you that yours is a good school. These are some of the things we liked best. You make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. You are helpful and caring in the way you look after each other. Teaching is good and helps you to be interested in what you are doing. Behaviour is good and your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted extremely well within the curriculum you study. You have an exciting range of activities, which help you excel in music and sports. We read the comments made by your parents and carers. The vast majority were very pleased with all that your teachers do to help you to learn and enjoy school. Please thank them for taking the time to write to us.

Your headteacher, other staff and the governing body are determined to make your school even better. To do this I have asked them to:

- make sure the work you do in all lessons matches your abilities and provides enough challenge, especially for the more-able pupils
- ensure that marking of your work gives you the help you need to improve your learning
- ensure that you have more opportunities to extend your skills at writing in all the subjects you study.

I hope you will play your part by continuing to work hard and to do your best to make your school even better.

Yours sincerely

Clare Henderson
Lead inspector

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