

# St Gabriel's CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104452
<b>Local authority</b>	Knowsley
<b>Inspection number</b>	377082
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 January 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Derek Watts

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	230
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Reverend Malcolm Rogers
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kevin Brayshaw
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 July 2007
<b>School address</b>	Ellis Ashton Street Huyton Liverpool L36 6BH
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## Introduction

Inspection team

Derek Watts  
Geoffrey Lawrence

Additional inspector  
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 18 lessons or part lessons, taught by eight different teachers. They held discussions with the headteacher, the staff, members of the governing body, parents and carers and pupils. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 were heard to read. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at the school's policies, assessment information, pupils' work, teachers' plans and school improvement planning. The inspectors analysed 50 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, 151 from Key Stage 2 pupils and 18 from staff.

## Information about the school

St Gabriel's Church of England is an average size primary school. The vast majority of the pupil population is of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and with disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is also above average. The school has met government floor standards during the past three years.

**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

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key Findings

- St Gabriel's Church of England Primary is a good school. It has maintained and built on the strengths identified in the previous inspection report.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress in communication, language, personal and social skills, from low starting points. Their progress in areas such as creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world is less consistent because of weaknesses in planning, provision and learning resources in these areas. Pupils make good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 and attainment is average by the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics. Effective steps have been taken to raise the achievement in writing. Pupils apply communication, literacy and numeracy skills well to support their learning.
- Teaching is good overall although there are minor inconsistencies in practice. Teachers convey clear expectations. Explanations, demonstrations and questioning promote learning and engage pupils well. Assessment is usually used effectively to plan teaching and to match tasks to pupils' abilities. Occasionally, learning can decline to satisfactory levels when lessons lack pace and pupils are not sufficiently active in their learning; very rarely, tasks are not sufficiently well matched to pupils' needs.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils are courteous, friendly and show respect for others. They know how to keep themselves safe. Attendance levels have improved from average to above average because of the actions taken by the school
- An established headteacher successfully promotes good teaching, good care and good achievement for all pupils. He is well supported by senior leaders and staff. Through accurate self-evaluation, the school knows its strengths and takes positive action to bring about improvements where needed. There is a good capacity for further improvement.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the planning, provision and learning resources in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that children make good progress in all areas of learning.
- Remove inconsistencies in teaching and learning by ensuring that in all lessons:
  - learning proceeds at a brisk pace and that pupils are actively involved in their learning
  - tasks are very closely matched to pupils' needs.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of knowledge and skill below those normally expected for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional skills. Children make rapid gains in communication, language and social skills because of good teaching and support in these areas. Children's progress in some other areas of learning is satisfactory rather than good because of inconsistencies in planning, provision and learning resources. Pupils are making good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 and this is the view of parents and carers. Pupils make good progress in reading because of the school's discrete and regular approach to the teaching of reading. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 showed an enthusiasm for books when reading to the inspectors. Attainment in reading is just below average by the end of Year 2 and average by Year 6. Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening because of the well planned opportunities for them to discuss their work in pairs and small groups. Effective steps are being taken to close the gap between boys' and girls' attainment, particularly in writing. Drama, the use of information and communication technology (ICT) and choosing topics which appeal to boys are contributing well to this drive to improve writing. Pupils write for a range of purposes and in different styles. In a successful Year 6 lesson, pupils made good progress in writing a description of an old mansion in the woods. They used an opener, powerful adjectives and similes to great effect. Their writing was well presented and grammar, punctuation and spelling were mostly accurate. More-able pupils structured their writing in paragraphs and used complex sentences and advanced vocabulary. In Year 1, pupils made good progress in using connectives in their descriptive writing. Pupils apply and develop their writing skills well in other subjects, particularly in topics and individual projects.

In a mathematics lessons seen, pupils made good progress because tasks were interesting and well matched to their needs. Pupils apply their numeracy skills well to solve a range of mathematical problems. Pupils in Year 5 showed a good understanding of place value as they solved problems by multiplying and dividing numbers with decimals by 10, 100 and 1000.

Pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities make good progress because of accurate assessment of their needs and the well targeted and specific guidance and support provided.

### **Quality of teaching**

Teaching successfully promotes good learning for pupils. Almost all of the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire thought that their children were well taught. Pupils told inspectors, 'teachers explain things well' and 'our topics are great fun'. These positive views are reflected in the inspection findings. There are examples of outstanding practice. For example, in a Year 4 history lesson, pupils were challenged by a range of exciting activities. They used ICT confidently in their research. High quality questioning by the teacher challenged their thinking. The teacher's strong subject knowledge and high expectations inspired and motivated the class. Pupils demonstrated an excellent understanding of life in World War II. Lessons have a clear purpose and so pupils know what they are expected to learn. Teachers create a positive learning atmosphere and their own enthusiasm engages and motivates the pupils. The teaching of basic skills such as letter sounds is effective. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to discuss their learning in pairs and to work collaboratively to solve problems. Interactive white boards are used imaginatively to illustrate key teaching and learning points. Teachers use questioning skilfully to challenge pupils' thinking and to check their understanding of new learning. In the main, assessment information is used well to plan teaching and to match tasks to pupils' different abilities and needs. Teaching and the curriculum promote pupils' application of communication, literacy and numeracy skills well. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed and make good contributions to pupils' learning, particularly for those who need additional help. In just a few lessons, the pace of learning slows with overlong introductions so that pupils are not sufficiently engaged in their learning. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, a lack of high-quality learning resources is hindering provision and children's progress in creative development and their knowledge and understanding of the world. The marking of pupils' work is effective. Praise and encouragement is provided for good work and constructive comments guide the next steps of pupils' learning well.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. In a number of lessons, particularly in Years 4, 5 and 6, pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour were exemplary. The school's 'Bee Code' is promoted well with messages such as: be caring, be kind, be honest, be respectful and be responsible. Staff establish very positive relationships with pupils and consistently convey high expectations of behavior to which pupils readily respond. All parents and carers who completed the questionnaire believe that their children feel safe at school and that they are well looked after. Pupils hold similar views. The vast majority of parents and carers believes that the school sets high standards of behaviour and that lessons are rarely disrupted by poor conduct. Just a few parents and carers expressed concern about how well bullying was dealt with. Incidents of bullying and inappropriate behaviour are rare but when these do occur, the school has clear strategies for dealing with them. There have been no fixed-term or permanent exclusions during the past four years. Very positive action has been taken to raise attendance from average to

above the national average. The learning mentor plays a valuable and effective role in monitoring and promoting good attendance.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher and staff are firmly focused on doing the best for all so that pupils make good progress in their academic and personal development. Leaders of mathematics and special educational needs are established and fully engaged in monitoring performance and improving their areas of responsibility. The leaders of English and Early Years Foundation Stage are new to their posts but they have a secure overview of their areas and have clear plans for further improvement. There are good procedures for the monitoring and development of teaching. These have contributed to the good practice. New teachers receive careful mentoring and support and there are clear plans to tackle minor inconsistencies in teaching. Leaders and staff have worked hard to provide a creative curriculum which promotes good academic achievement and positive personal outcomes for pupils. Improvements to provision for writing are having a positive impact on pupils' achievement. Good links between subjects add enjoyment, meaning and relevance to pupils' learning. The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a real strength at St Gabriel's. Within the school's very positive ethos, pupils show considerable care, respect and support for others. The strong partnership with the church makes a valuable contribution to pupils' development.

The school successfully engages with its parents and carers. The survey indicates that parents and carers are pleased with the care and education provided for their children. They are particularly pleased with safety, how well their children are looked after, the development of pupils' essential skills, how well the school helps them to support their child's learning and the quality of teaching. Parents and carers appreciate the workshops provided in phonics and numeracy to help them support their children's learning.

Members of the governing body show a good understanding of the school's strengths and development areas and this enables them to provide support and constructive challenge to senior leaders. The chair is particularly active and enthusiastic in his work with the school. Good attention is given to safeguarding and there are effective policies and procedures to protect pupils. Safe practices for pupils are successfully promoted through the school's teaching and curriculum. All pupils have full access to the wide range of learning activities provided and staff strive to ensure that pupils progress as well as they can. Equality of opportunity is well promoted and discrimination is effectively tackled.

The school has maintained and built on the strengths identified in the previous inspection report. Improvements to attendance and to pupils' achievement in writing reflect the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.

## 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	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 2010 to 31 August 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](http://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.



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## 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.
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.**



26 January 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of St Gabriel's C of E Primary School, Liverpool, L36 6BH**

Thank you so much for welcoming us into your school, giving us your views and showing us your work. We enjoyed our visit. St Gabriel's is a good school. It has maintained and built on the strengths identified in the last inspection. The main strengths are:

- You enjoy school and have positive attitudes to learning.
- Attendance is above average.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress in language and social skills.
- You are making good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 because of the strong teaching you receive.
- You get on well with others and your behavior is good.
- You say you feel safe at school because teachers and other adults take care of you.
- The school is led well by the headteacher and he receives good support from other senior leaders.
- Parents and carers are pleased with the school, particularly your care and safety.

We have given your school a few points for improvement

- Planning and resources should be improved in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that children make good progress in all areas of learning.
- In a few classes, the lessons could move along more quickly and you could be more involved in your learning. We have also asked teachers to ensure that tasks are always challenging for you and not too easy or too hard.

You can all help by continuing to work hard and attending regularly as you do at present.

Yours sincerely

Derek Watts  
Lead Inspector

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