

St Luke's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105805
Local Authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	355843
Inspection dates	12–13 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Christine Millett

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	212
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Matthew Carlisle
Headteacher	Mr Steve Bentham
Date of previous school inspection	25 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 15 lessons or parts of lessons taught by seven teachers, spent time in the Early Years Foundation Stage and looked at pupils' work. Discussions took place with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents. Inspectors looked at documents, including policies relating to safeguarding, the school's development plan and self-evaluation records, minutes of governors' meetings and the school's own assessment data. The inspectors analysed questionnaires from pupils and staff as well as those from 107 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- The effectiveness of the school's systems for tracking pupils' progress.
- How community cohesion has broadened pupils' understanding of the world in which they live.
- The improvements that have taken place in outdoor provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage since the previous inspection

Information about the school

St Luke's is a smaller than average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. Very few are from other minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is currently below average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is slightly above average. There have been significant staff changes since the previous inspection, including the appointment of a new headteacher.

The school has received several awards including Activemark, Healthy School status and an Eco-school award.

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: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

St Luke's is a good school. It has many strengths, the most notable being the high quality care, guidance and support pupils receive and their high level of attendance. The school provides a safe and welcoming environment where pupils feel valued. They are proud of their school and keen to talk to visitors about their work. They have confidence in adults to help them sort out their problems. Staff are mindful of pupils' safety and good safeguarding arrangements are in place. Of the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire, the overwhelming majority are supportive of the school and value the quality of care it provides. The school is exploring ways of engaging parents further to enable them to support their children. A range of partnership activities with other agencies makes a strong contribution to good achievement and well-being. Pupils' experiences of different cultures and beliefs are enhanced through the curriculum and links with schools in India and in the United Kingdom.

Many children start school with skills and knowledge that are below national expectations; skills in communication, language and literacy are well below. Children get off to a good start in the Reception class and do well in the Early Years Foundation Stage where they have access to an exciting, well-planned outdoor area. Progress from Year 1 to Year 6 continues to be good. There have been fluctuations in standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 because of the differing needs and abilities of cohorts and how this impacts upon data. The school's own tracking system shows that attainment is rising. There has been a noticeable increase in the number of pupils reaching the higher levels in mathematics. Teaching is good overall with some evidence of outstanding practice seen. The daily use of assessment for learning is not yet embedded in all classes and there are inconsistencies in the marking of pupils' work. Other forms of assessment are regular and feed into an effective tracking system. Senior managers use this well to identify areas for development. However, it is not always used to best effect within the classroom. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported and, as a result, make similar progress to their peers.

The headteacher is supported well by staff and a loyal governing body and all share an ambitious vision for future improvement. Senior teachers and the governing body know what the school does well and make good use of accurate self-evaluation to highlight areas for improvement. The impact of this is being seen, indicating a good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Bring greater rigour to teachers' day-to-day assessment for learning by:

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- increasing the range of strategies used in lessons to check the extent to which pupils have understood and are making progress
 - using marking consistently to inform pupils of their next steps in learning
 - analysing year-end assessment data to plan activities that are closely matched to the needs of specific cohorts and which ensure progression in learning from one key stage to the next.
- Help parents and carers to support the school and their children by:
- developing methods of consultation
 - communicating strategies which inform and enable them to support their children's learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils develop good attitudes towards learning as they move up through the school. They enjoy learning and collaborate well when working in groups or in pairs. Pupils were keen to engage the inspectors in conversation and expressed their views clearly and openly.

The quality of learning seen in lessons during the inspection was good overall. Work seen in pupils' books confirmed the school's own analysis of pupils making good progress from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 2. Boys and girls do equally well and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make as much progress as others. The progress of pupils is monitored carefully to ensure all achieve well. Recent data analysis shows that most pupils across the school are on track to meet their targets with some exceeding them. Children arrive in Reception with varying levels of skills, having attended many different settings. Overall, they start school with skills and knowledge that are below national expectations. Some aspects such as communication, language and literacy and social development, are well below. They get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and this prepares them well for learning in Year 1, though literacy skills are still below national averages. Overall attainment at the end of Year 6 is average. Standards at the end of Year 6 in 2010 showed a marked improvement, particularly in writing. Pupils in the current Year 6 are on course to reach higher standards by the end of Key Stage 2 than in previous years.

Pupils enjoy school. High attendance supports this. As one pupil said, 'This is a very friendly school. All your friends support you'. Relationships throughout school are good. A small minority of pupils expressed concerns over behaviour in school, but no instances of inappropriate behaviour were seen during the inspection and pupils were well mannered and friendly. Pupils of all ages have a clear understanding of the importance of healthy eating and regular exercise. Pupils respond extremely well to the responsibilities they are given and make many positive contributions to the school and local communities. This is seen, for example, in their involvement in the planning of the new playground and wildlife area. Pupils' high attendance and positive attitudes along with a good grasp of basic skills, including information and communication technology (ICT), equip them well for the next stages in their education. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have a marked sense of right and wrong and enjoy the different cultural experiences the school provides. The school's values encourage pupils to think beyond themselves and to have a keen interest in ethical issues.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teaching, overall, is good and lessons offer a range of activities that engage pupils. As a result, pupils enjoy learning and make good progress. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and learning objectives are shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons. Planning is thorough and work is generally well matched to pupils' needs. Pupils make the best progress where teachers plan challenging lessons with high expectations for achievement. Accurate assessments are carried out regularly and used to track progress and analyse attainment. However, year-end assessments are not always used to inform planning for the next class. Pupils' work is marked regularly but does not always give them a clear indication as to how they can improve their work. Other adults in the classroom give valuable support.

The curriculum places appropriate emphasis on promoting basic skills, especially literacy, as well as making links in learning across subjects. These provide imaginative opportunities for learning which are popular with pupils and contribute well to personal development. Information and communication technology is well incorporated into the curriculum. The school provides a broad range of enrichment experiences through visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities. French is taught in Key Stage 2.

St Luke's is an extremely caring school that places great importance on developing pupils' self-esteem and confidence to enable them to make correct choices for themselves. Adults

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know pupils well and respond very positively to their needs. The individual needs of pupils are quickly assessed and help is given where needed. Pupils at risk of underachievement, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are extremely well supported by experienced and well-trained staff and through very strong links with external agencies.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Members of the leadership team are united in their determination to bring about improvement. Systems for analysing and recording pupils' attainment are in place and provide a sharp focus on the achievements of different groups of pupils. As a result, the gap between the different groups is closing. The governing body understands the challenges facing the school and works hard to support the school. Although some of the governors are relatively new to their roles, they are committed to improving the school further.

The school development plan focuses on the most important areas for improvement and is clear about how targets are to be achieved. There are effective links with a range of external agencies, including the local secondary school, that support the progress and well-being of the pupils. The school enjoys a positive relationship with parents and carers and endeavours to keep them informed of developments within school. However, the school recognises more could be done to enable them to support their children's learning. The school demonstrates a deep commitment to equal opportunities for all. This is seen in the harmonious and inclusive atmosphere. The monitoring of pupils ensures that any unevenness in academic performance or personal development is addressed. Community cohesion is good. Pupils from all backgrounds get on well with each other and there are regular celebrations of other cultures. The school ensures that pupils understand their local community and have an understanding of the diversity of life in, and beyond, the United Kingdom. Safeguarding procedures, policies and practice are securely in place. The school deploys its resources well and gives good value for money.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Provision, however, is outstanding. The new Foundation Stage manager and staff have introduced a programme of rich and varied experiences for the children which is yet to impact fully upon outcomes. Children thrive in this stimulating and thoroughly enjoyable environment. They work and play happily alongside each other and respond quickly to instructions from adults. Children settle in well as they start school due to the warm relationships that adults establish quickly with them. Adults encourage children to be independent, make choices in activities and develop social skills that ensure good behaviour.

Children start the Reception class with skills and knowledge that are below and, in some areas, well below age-related expectations. Excellent teaching and an extremely well-organised curriculum ensure the gap is closing by the end of Reception. Children are presented with many positive learning experiences and have numerous opportunities to develop writing skills through mark making as part of their play.

Thorough assessment ensures that individual children's progress is tracked regularly and well-targeted support given. Achievements are recorded as attractive 'learning journeys' which provide parents and carers with an ongoing record of their child's development. The bright and attractive learning environment enables children to have fun while making choices about their learning, such as whether to join in with the hunt for pirate treasure or write messages to go in bottles. Learning moves easily between the indoor and outdoor areas giving all children the opportunities to have fun and learn from each other.

A relatively new team has quickly established strong working relationships. Good leadership is focused strongly on continuous improvement. Staff are vigilant and children's welfare has a high priority. The unit is fully incorporated into school life, which ensures

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smooth transitions from Reception into Year 1. Good links are developed with parents and carers, who speak appreciatively of the 'friendly, helpful staff'.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Over half of the school's parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Some did not respond as their child had only been in school a short time and they felt unable to comment. However, of those who did respond, all agreed that teaching in school is good. The vast majority were happy with the school and of the opinion that their children are making good progress, enjoy school and are kept safe. Most believed that the school keeps parents and carers informed about progress being made. A very small minority felt they would like more help in supporting their children's learning and that their concerns are not taken into account. Inspectors found that relationships between the school and parents and carers are positive. The school is working towards greater engagement with parents and carers and is happy to meet with them to discuss any matter. A few parents and carers raised individual concerns and these were followed up by the inspectors. It was found that the school has effective procedures in place in relation to the issues raised.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Luke's Church of England Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 136 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 212 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	91	67	43	32	1	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	79	58	56	41	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	48	35	75	55	10	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	70	51	58	43	6	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	70	51	65	48	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	55	40	72	53	5	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	54	40	77	57	4	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	44	32	81	60	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	63	46	63	46	8	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	49	36	68	50	15	11	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	39	29	82	60	10	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	58	43	73	54	5	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	69	51	64	47	2	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



14 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Luke's Church of England Primary School, Heywood, OL10 4XB

Thank you for all your help when we visited your school. We thoroughly enjoyed our time with you. You were very polite and helped us to understand how you feel about your school. You told us how much you enjoy school and how special you think it is. We agree with you and think that St Luke's provides you with a good education.

- You get off to a good start in the Reception class and make good progress during your time in the school.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 are average but improving.
- You enjoy coming to school, are keen to learn and attendance is high.
- Your behaviour is good both in the classroom and around school.
- Adults look after you extremely well and make sure you are safe.
- Teaching is good and teachers try to make lessons interesting.
- You show a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and know how to keep yourselves and others safe.
- You contribute well to the life of the school and the local community.
- Your school is helping you prepare for the next stages in your education.

To make your school even better we would like your teachers to keep checking how much progress you are making in lessons and when they mark your work, to let you know what your next steps are. We would also like the school to let your parents and carers know how they can help you.

We know that you are proud of your school and will do your best to help your teachers make it even better. Very best wishes for the future

Yours sincerely

Mrs Christine Millett

Lead inspector

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