

St Andrew's CofE Primary School, Over Hulton

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105236
Local Authority	Bolton
Inspection number	355732
Inspection dates	23–24 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Terry McDermott

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	217
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Philip Cartwright
Headteacher	Mrs Elizabeth Rogerson
Date of previous school inspection	4 February 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 14 lessons. All nine teachers were seen teaching, most of them twice. Inspectors held meetings with pupils, staff and governors. They observed the school's work, and looked at many examples of pupils' books, the school improvement plan, monitoring records, governing body minutes and reports from the School Improvement Partner. Responses from 146 parents or carers to the Ofsted questionnaire were analysed and considered, along with responses from staff, and from pupils in Years 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.

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

- Does teaching meet the needs of all groups of pupils well enough, and provide enough challenge to enable them all to make consistently good progress?
- Is pupils' personal development as good as the school claims and if it is, what makes it so?
- Do leaders and managers have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas requiring improvement, and do they have the ambition and drive to move the school further forward?

Information about the school

This is an average size school. It has an Early Years Foundation Stage with a Reception class. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average. No pupils are at an early stage of learning to speak English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with statements of special educational needs is below average.

Before-school provision takes place on site, but is not managed by the governing body, and was not part of this inspection.

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

This is a good school. It has several excellent features. It promotes community cohesion outstandingly well through its long-standing and relentless role modelling of tolerance, compassion, respect and the valuing of diversity. Pupils make an exceptionally strong contribution to the life of the school and the wider community. This leads directly to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils love coming to school as is shown through their high attendance, and their enthusiastic involvement in the life of the school, and everything it has to offer. They say they feel completely safe here and can explain many reasons why this is so. Their parents and carers unanimously agree.

The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was good, and explains pupils' good learning over time. This was also demonstrated in pupils' books, in the school's reliable and accurate tracking system, and in the maintenance of above average standards over time. Learning in lessons was sometimes seen to slow unnecessarily when work set did not meet pupils' learning needs appropriately. This applied particularly to higher attaining pupils. Several pupils confirmed that 'work is sometimes quite easy'.

The curriculum is good. It is well planned, and often links subjects together to give pupils practical hands-on experiences to make learning real. Pupils say that this makes lessons fun. A wide range of enrichment activities gives pupils many opportunities to develop their personal attributes, and underpins their good all-round development.

The good quality of care, guidance and support for all pupils is crucial to their emotional security. Adults in the school know pupils and their families well. They very quickly pick up when pupils may be having problems or difficulties, and have a wide range of support available to provide rapid, sympathetic, and effective assistance.

School self-evaluation is accurate, if sometimes a little modest. Recent changes in management methods have led to improvements since the last inspection in the quality of teaching, in the progress pupils make, in the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage, and in the leadership of the school. However, more still needs to be done. Leaders at all levels do not yet evaluate the effectiveness of classroom activities with enough rigour. Some uncertainty still exists over the interpretation of assessment information. Nonetheless, the school's capacity for improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency of learning in lessons by:
 - making more effective use of assessment information to plan and set challenging tasks for all pupils, but particularly the more able.

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- ensuring that leaders at all levels check more closely and more often on the progress pupils are making in class.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Learning seen in lessons during the inspection was good. Pupils listen carefully to guidance from the teacher and to each other. They are well behaved, and work sensibly when not directly supervised. In the large majority of lessons, pupils learn at a good pace. In a minority of lessons, learning is only satisfactory because work is not planned accurately enough to present sufficient challenge to all pupils. In the very best lessons, even the younger pupils demonstrate that they can work things out for themselves when they are set interesting and demanding tasks. This was seen in an outstanding Year 1 lesson when pupils had to work together but independently to find out the meanings and spellings of words, and use them in a grammatically correct manner to tell their own short stories.

At the end of Year 2 in 2010, pupils' attainment in reading was significantly above average, their attainment in writing, above average, and in mathematics, broadly average. At the end of Year 6 in 2010, pupils' attainment was well above average in English and mathematics. When considering their above average starting points, this represents good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make progress at the same good rate as their classmates because of the skilful support they receive. Boys and girls make similar progress. There is no trend of academic underachievement by any particular group of pupils.

Pupils say they enjoy coming to school because, 'we have lots of friends', and because, 'learning about things is fun'. They are quite certain there is no bullying, even though they are well aware of what to do should it occur. They have a good understanding of how to lead healthy lives, and know broadly how exercise helps their bodies to work more efficiently. They know where dangers lurk in the outside world, and how to avoid them. They can be trusted to play and work sensibly. They are proud of their school, and are keen to take up positions of responsibility as school councillors or as play leaders. They have a deep and often emotional understanding of the severe difficulties faced by other children in different parts of the world. Their work in support of the Phakamisa Project working with AIDS orphaned children in South Africa is exemplary. It has a marked impact on their perceptions of the world. This contributes significantly to their excellent community spirit within the school. When they leave the school at the end of Year 6, their academic attainment is well above average. Several aspects of their personal development are outstanding. They are generous, honest, reliable and well-informed young citizens. For these reasons, they are well prepared for the next stage of their education and their lives.

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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	2
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	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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	1

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?

All lessons are characterised by good relationships between adults and pupils, and by pupils' consistently good behaviour. Pupils like being in their classrooms which present a good balance between building the traditional '3R' skills, and hands-on learning. The best lessons, the large majority, get under way quickly, and provide exciting tasks which stimulate pupils' interest. In these lessons, pupils are usually expected to take responsibility for much of their own learning, and they make good progress. Pupils are routinely expected to explain their answers or solutions. This secures their understanding. Learning is sometimes slower than it might be when work does not offer sufficient challenge. This happens when insufficient use has been made of assessment information to match work to pupils' individual learning needs. In a small number of other lessons, teachers talk too much and pupils have to sit listening passively instead of learning actively. Pupils are well aware of their longer term targets, but the marking of their work is inconsistent in the guidance it provides on what to do next to get better.

The curriculum often links subjects together around themes, for example 'The Egyptians'. Every theme has practical aspects, and visits or visitors in support, which helps bring learning to life. Pupils find this way of working thought provoking, and they speak with enthusiasm about their experiences. The school offers a good range of extra-curricular activities including sport, choral singing, and residential visits.

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The care, guidance and support the school provides solidly underpin pupils' enjoyment of school, and their sense of security. Arrangements for recording and evaluating the effectiveness of different support actions or programmes are being developed. Transition arrangements for movement into, through, and out of school are good. The school recruits assistance promptly from professional and other agencies when the need arises.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

School self-evaluation is accurate because it is measured objectively against outcomes for pupils. The experienced adults in the school share a desire for improvement, there is a strong team spirit and morale is good. The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching is accurate, but is sometimes described in an unnecessarily complicated manner. Monitoring is beginning to be shared so that leaders at all levels can properly assume their responsibility and accountability. The school's engagement with parents and carers is good, and they strongly express their appreciation for the work of the school.

Governance is good. Members know what the school does well and where it might improve. They give generously of their time, and make full use of their different skills and experiences in holding the school to account for its performance. Safeguarding procedures are fully understood and carried out well, because pupils' best interests are paramount in the work of the school. Current requirements are met. Parents and carers are unanimous in their view that their children are safe in school.

The school works diligently and successfully to ensure that all forms of inequality or bias are rigorously addressed. This is evident in the calm, harmonious atmosphere in the school, free from discrimination or harassment. Equality of opportunity for all pupils is good. The provision the school makes for community cohesion is exemplary. It is long-standing, well understood, and its principles are central to the school's inclusive Christian ethic and philosophy. The impact of this work on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is significant. The school 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	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Some children joining the Reception class have attended various types of pre-school provision, but some have not had that experience. Their starting points are usually in line with the normal expectations for their age. Regular and reliable assessments show that children make good progress in almost every area of learning. They leave Early Years Foundation Stage with standards which are consistently above average. This is because overall provision is good.

Effective links with parents and carers ensure that children settle easily into a happy and caring environment for learning. Adults focus on helping children to become confident and independent. They are calm, patient and very caring, providing good role models from which children learn how to play and work together in harmony. Children behave sensibly, sharing their thoughts and ideas, as well as their toys well. They take good care of each other and their environment. This solid foundation of good personal and social development sets the tone for the continuing good relationships between adults and pupils as they move through the school. Little evidence was seen of child-initiated learning since major building work on the outside provision prevented access.

Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage rest with the headteacher. Procedures for ensuring children's welfare are good and replicate whole-school methods. Assessments are made to the same standards as in the rest of the school. Day-to-day planning is based securely on what children have already learned and can do.

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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	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

At 67%, the response by parents and carers to the questionnaire was much larger than is usual. Their response was overwhelmingly positive. They were unanimous that the school keeps their children safe, and equally unanimous that they were happy with their children's experiences at the school. A small minority of parents and carers did not feel that unacceptable behaviour is dealt with effectively. The pupils with whom inspectors spoke did not confirm this. They felt that the very rare instances of challenging behaviour were dealt with quickly and fairly, and did not cause any disruption to their learning. A smaller minority of parents and carers did not feel that the school took account of their views. Inspectors could find no written evidence to support this contention, and judged the school's partnerships with parents and carers to be good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Andrew's CofE Primary School, Over Hulton 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 146 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 217 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	107	73	36	25	2	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	109	75	37	25	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	61	42	83	57	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	69	47	74	51	2	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	81	55	62	42	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	77	53	66	45	1	1	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	68	47	74	51	3	2	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)	62	42	78	53	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	70	48	74	51	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	62	42	67	46	10	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	67	46	69	47	7	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	74	51	69	47	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	89	61	57	39	0	0	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.



25 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Andrew's CofE Primary School, Over Hulton, Bolton, BL5 1EN

Thank you for making us so welcome when we inspected your school recently. We were impressed with your calm good manners, your politeness and the considerate way in which you help each other. We particularly appreciated your good behaviour and the way in which you can be trusted to get on with your work.

We found that St Andrews is a good school. We found that the way in which it promotes community cohesion is outstanding (that means getting on well together, appreciating each others' difficulties, and understanding that we may each see things differently – not only within the school but much wider than that). This helps you all to become tolerant and patient, and really good young citizens, ready to move on to the next stage of your education when you leave school at the end of Year 6.

However, we found some things that the school could do better than it does at present. So I have asked the adults who lead, manage and teach in the school to do the following things to help you to make even better progress:

- Ensure that teachers use the information they already have about what you know and can do, to set work that really stretches you, making sure that no one is set work which is too easy;
- Ensure that adults in charge of different subjects or parts of the school check more closely and more often that you are learning enough, and if they find that you are not being kept working, ensure that something is done about it.

You can help your school to get even better by continuing to be the thoughtful, considerate and generous young citizens that you already are, and also by letting the headteacher know if you find your work easy, just like you told me.

Yours sincerely

Mr Terry McDermott

Lead inspector

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