

St Luke's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105708
Local Authority	Oldham
Inspection number	355821
Inspection dates	26–27 January 2011
Reporting 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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs M Hughes
Headteacher	Mr I Walsh
Date of previous school inspection	7 July 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 13 lessons taught by seven different teachers and held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documents relating to safeguarding, pupils' progress and attainment, the curriculum, the school's development plan and the way in which the school evaluates its own performance. Inspectors scrutinised the views of staff and pupils and analysed 104 questionnaires from parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether pupils, and, in particular the more-able, make good progress in English and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching and learning and use made of assessment to enable all pupils to achieve high levels of attainment.
- The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Whether leaders and managers have improved pupils' achievement and met the issues raised at the last inspection.

Information about the school

This school is average in size compared with other primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average. A higher than average proportion of pupils have minority ethnic heritages. A high proportion of pupils are at an early stage of learning English. Mobility into and out of the school is high and only a minority of pupils spends all their primary years there. The school has gained Healthy School status.

The school runs a before- and after-school provision, which was inspected as part of this inspection. The Children's Centre, situated within the school building, is subject to a separate 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. Pupils of all ages and cultural backgrounds learn and play together happily and harmoniously. Good care, guidance and support ensure that pupils feel safe and secure, especially those experiencing school for the first time in St Luke's.

When children join the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage, their learning skills are weak. By the time they leave Year 6, their attainment is broadly average in English and mathematics. This is despite a high proportion of pupils joining the school within Key Stages 1 and 2. The level of pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 indicates good progress for all groups of pupils. The rate of progress is good rather than outstanding because, despite some improvement, attendance levels are low. Engagement with parents and carers is generally positive. However, there are not enough opportunities for them to find out how they can support their children's learning or engage with the school to raise attendance levels.

Good teaching provides lessons where pupils enjoy their learning, although staff do not consistently set tasks which sufficiently challenge more-able pupils to achieve higher levels of attainment. Furthermore, when teachers mark pupils' work, they do not consistently provide relevant advice which will help them to improve. The recently introduced creative curriculum is based on pupils' interests and is helping to enhance reading and writing skills. The wide range of additional activities provides good experiences beyond the classroom and increases pupils' enjoyment of learning well. Community cohesion arrangements ensure that the school knows its local community well. Pupils work and play happily together, but have limited awareness of other communities beyond their own or in the wider world.

Effective leadership, with the full commitment of staff and members of the governing body, has successfully embedded a clear vision for school improvement. Since the last inspection, standards have gradually risen, particularly in Key Stage 1, and there is evidence of improvement in attendance as the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has reduced significantly. Thorough self-evaluation ensures the school knows what needs to be done to sustain and accelerate improvements and there is good capacity to do so.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate pupils' progress, by:
 - ensuring all lessons consistently challenge pupils and, in particular, the more-able to achieve the higher levels of attainment

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- ensuring that marking consistently guides pupils in what they need to do to improve their work.
- Extend parental engagement with the school, by:
 - working more closely with them to raise attendance levels
 - involving them more fully in school activities and in supporting the pupils' learning at home.
- Improve community cohesion, by:
 - developing pupils' awareness of other cultures and lifestyles both nationally and globally
 - monitoring the impact on pupils' attitudes of the strategies put in place to extend community cohesion.

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

Good behaviour and interest in learning was observed in all classes, making a strong contribution to pupils' good progress. High-quality relationships were seen; pupils co-operate well with each other and generally take a pride in their work. Achievement is good and pupils enjoy learning, particularly when activities are practical or give them time to discuss what they are learning.

School and national data show clearly that pupils who enter the school in the Reception class or Key Stage 1 and stay until the end of Key Stage 2 reach broadly average standards. The work in pupils' books shows that all pupils are on course to reach their targets. Good arrangements for equality of opportunity ensure boys and girls, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those learning English as an additional language progress equally well.

Pupils say school is a place of safety where, 'teachers care for us'. They know the importance of looking after their health and their enthusiasm led them to set up a healthy tuck shop. Although a few pupils think others do not always behave well and that there is some bullying, they are confident that staff will sort out any difficulties. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils study major world faiths but have limited knowledge of cultures outside their locality.

Pupils make a strong contribution to the school, representing their classmates of the eco-club or on the school council. For example, eco-club members grew fruit and vegetables which they sold to buy equipment for the school. They enjoy joint activities with other local schools such as hosting chess competitions, but have limited involvement in the wider community. Pupils develop satisfactory rather than good workplace skills and preparation for the future because attendance which, although improving, remains low.

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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	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	4
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?

Pupils co-operate well with staff, enjoy lessons and say 'teachers make learning fun'. Well-planned, varied lessons often involve practical activities. For example, acting out the role of journalists in a Key Stage 2 class helps pupils recall and recount events more confidently. In the few lessons where teaching and learning are satisfactory rather than good, staff miss opportunities to set tasks which sufficiently challenge the more-able pupils; they have an over-reliance on worksheets or do not consistently ensure comments in pupils' books help them to improve. Learning assistants are well-deployed, and skillfully support pupils learning English or those with special needs and/or disabilities.

By building on their interests to promote language and capture pupils' enthusiasm, the recently introduced creative curriculum encourages pupils to reflect on and question what they want to learn in each topic. The before- and after-school club, and further activities set up by the school, are well-attended and extend pupils' interests and talents effectively.

Staff, and in particular the learning mentor, know pupils and their families well and pupils who are vulnerable due to their circumstances are particularly well-supported. The school has striking examples of how pupils with particular needs have progressed well due to the good care, guidance and support provided. Good partnerships with external health and support agencies, often through links with the Children's Centre, benefit pupils and families well. The school has increasingly effective strategies to improve attendance, and success is noted in the reductions of the number of pupils who are persistently absent.

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However, more work is needed to engage those families who do not understand that attending school every day is expected and essential to ensure their children achieve their best.

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?

Leadership and management are fully delegated and well-structured. Ambitious, challenging targets for the school and for pupils are based on thorough analysis of assessment information. Senior leaders carefully evaluate outcomes and draw up action plans for improvement. Good monitoring of teaching and learning provides the basis for management of teaching and professional development, resulting in good quality teaching and learning.

Members of the governing body ensure that pupils are safe and hold the school to account through the good level of support and challenge they provide. Partnerships with professional agencies and other schools provide good support for pupils' learning and well-being. Relationships with parents and carers are generally positive. However, there are too few opportunities for them to be involved in school life or to help support the pupils' learning.

Sensitively targeted support for those with additional needs ensures that all pupils have equal access to all activities.

Good safeguarding arrangements effectively ensure that pupils feel safe in the school building and around the site and know what to do if they have a concern or problem. Child protection training is up-to-date and procedures are understood by all adults. The quality of community cohesion is satisfactory. The school understands the local community well and the school itself is harmonious. However, pupils' experiences and knowledge of other cultures and lifestyles both nationally and globally are limited. The school is yet to monitor fully the impact on pupils' attitudes of strategies put in place to extend community cohesion.

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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	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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Most children start the Early Years Foundation Stage with weak skills, and a few do not speak English. Recent reorganisation of leadership and provision has resulted in improvement to the rate of children's learning and development. Children now progress well in all areas of learning, most particularly in their personal and social skills and in learning to speak English. By the time they move to Year 1, many children have not met all the expectations for their age. However, given their low starting points they make good progress.

Children feel secure in the warm, welcoming environment and happily explore the exciting activities. Good teaching is based on a secure knowledge of the curriculum for young children. Activities are well-planned to provide an appropriate balance between activities led by adults and those the children choose independently. A good range of indoor and outdoor opportunities is provided which develops children's language and number skills, and encourages them to become increasingly independent learners. This occurs despite the current, though soon to be improved, limited outdoor facilities.

Learning is carefully monitored, ensuring that each child's particular needs are met, so that they all progress well and their achievements are recorded and celebrated. The staff work as a strong team under the skilled guidance of the Early Years Foundation Stage leader. Together, they have established high expectations and good systems for meeting the learning, welfare and developmental needs of every child.

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

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

Just over half of parents and carers completed the questionnaire. Of these, most were highly positive in their responses. Parents and carers are particularly pleased that the school helps the children to lead healthy and safe lifestyles, that teaching is good, that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour and that leadership and management are good. A few feel that the school does not meet their child's particular needs or inform them of their child's progress. Inspectors followed these issues up and found that, although the learning needs of all pupils are managed well, parents and carers are not given enough opportunities to become involved in school life or in learning how they can support their child's learning at home. Furthermore, more-able pupils are not consistently challenged in all lessons to achieve the higher levels of attainment.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Luke's CofE 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 104 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 204 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	55	53	47	45	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	61	59	41	39	2	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	51	49	47	45	6	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	46	44	52	50	6	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	51	49	44	42	8	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	44	42	50	48	10	10	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	55	53	45	43	3	3	1	1
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)	46	44	47	45	6	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	46	44	50	48	7	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	47	45	47	45	4	4	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	39	38	55	53	4	4	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	56	54	43	41	3	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	53	51	45	43	6	6	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



28 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Luke's C of E Primary School, Oldham, OL9 9HT

Thank you for talking to us and helping us when we visited your school. The inspectors were impressed by how polite and friendly you are and by your good behaviour. Most parents and carers are pleased and say you are happy at school.

St Luke's is a good school. It has good teaching and it is well-run. The Reception class gives you a good start to your education. You enjoy learning, work hard and are keen to try everything. You make good progress in your learning and reach broadly average levels of attainment by the time you leave in Year 6. The staff provides good care for each one of you and especially those who need extra help or who join your school during the term. You say you feel safe in school and know how to lead healthy lifestyles.

The school leaders want you to aim high and are always looking to make the school even better, so I have asked them to:

- check that all lessons consistently challenge you, especially the more-able, so that you reach higher standards
- make sure that marking of your work helps you to improve
- work more closely with your parents and carers to ensure you all come to school every day and that they know how they can help with your learning
- teach you about different lifestyles in the wider world.

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

Yours sincerely,

Clare Henderson

Lead Inspector

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