

Eccleston St Mary's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119472
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	379815
Inspection dates	5–6 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Gillian Salter-Smith

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	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Jukes
Headteacher	William Mann
Date of previous school inspection	23 September 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Sixteen lessons were observed and 11 teachers were seen. In addition, a number of short visits were made to a wide range of lessons with a focus on specific issues identified for inspection. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, staff and the local authority school adviser. An inspector talked to parents and carers as they brought their children to school in the morning. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation documents. Other documents scrutinised included the school improvement plans, information on pupils' progress, documents related to the safeguarding of pupils and staff, and the community cohesion policy. Inspectors analysed 114 questionnaires received from parents and carers together with those received from pupils and staff.

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

- How effective teaching and assessment are in enhancing pupils' progress especially in writing for boys, and for the more-able pupils.
- How successful are teaching and the curriculum in developing pupils' creativity and independence.
- What the school is doing to help pupils achieve outstanding personal development.
- How well senior and subject leaders are bringing about improvements in areas identified within the school improvement plans.

Information about the school

The number of pupils on roll is a little lower than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of girls compared with boys is higher than is found in most schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below average, although the number with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.

Awards achieved recently by the school include: Artsmark Gold; Information and Communication (ICT) mark; Church School Award; The Inclusion Quality mark; Sing Up Platinum Award; Basic Skills; Activemark; Healthy Schools status; Learning Excellence.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

St Mary's is an outstanding school. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and thrive in a warm and supportive atmosphere that is underpinned by strong moral values. A determination to develop pupils' full potential as learners and as thoughtful, well-rounded and responsible individuals is shared among leaders, the governing body and staff. Staff morale is high, and they work successfully as a team to enable pupils to achieve excellence in their academic achievement and personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school is highly inclusive. The outstanding care, support and guidance is further supported through excellent partnerships with local agencies and ensure that all pupils are fully included in every aspect of school life. Parents and carers are highly appreciative of the school's work. Very productive relationships between school and home enable parents and carers to be very strongly engaged in supporting their children's learning.

The outstanding curriculum provides many exciting and challenging activities that interest pupils, meet their individual needs and develop them as independent and creative learners. From starting points in the Reception class that are just above those typical for their age, pupils make outstanding progress across the school and maintain high attainment because teaching is outstanding overall. Occasional dips in performance occur following the long summer break, especially for younger pupils.

Leaders set high expectations of themselves, staff and pupils. Rigorous monitoring of pupils' individual progress helps to identify and tackle potential underachievement and to hold staff closely to account. Close monitoring of teaching and learning informs accurate self-evaluation and the school improvement plan guides improvement effectively. For example, the focus on improving attainment in boys' writing has been very effective, with many activities introduced that stimulate good quality writing. As a result the gap between boys and girls is narrowing considerably. Although the school improvement plan is reviewed regularly, it is not monitored as rigorously as it might be and the school's analysis of information on pupils' progress is not yet refined sufficiently to give a full picture of its impact on all pupils. Since the previous inspection, high levels of attainment have been maintained and outcomes in Key Stage 1 have improved significantly. Issues identified for improvement have been tackled effectively. Consequently, the school demonstrates an outstanding capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Monitor even more closely the impact of the school improvement plan by:
 - further refining the way senior leaders use data on pupils' progress to identify whether the actions taken are fully effective for all pupils
 - involving the governing body more closely in monitoring the impact of specific targets identified in the school improvement plan.
- Find ways to overcome the dip in attainment evident following the summer break among some younger pupils by:
 - providing support for parents and carers to help children and pupils to continue to develop and learn over long holiday periods.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils' progress is outstanding overall. Pupils are keen to learn and make the most of all that the school offers. Their positive attitudes contribute significantly to their outstanding progress. Pupils concentrate well, enjoy a challenge and are often engrossed in their work. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils enjoyed the high level of challenge of the problem posed. They collaborated well in pairs and articulated confidently the reasoning behind their thoughts and suggestions. Pupils enjoy working independently and tackle homework enthusiastically, making very good use of the interactive technology between home and school.

Although girls often outperform boys, especially in writing, the attainment of both boys and girls is much higher than the national average and the proportion of pupils reaching above average levels by Year 2 and Year 6 has increased in both English and mathematics. The gap between girls and boys in writing is closing rapidly in response to improvements in the curriculum, resources and teaching. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, make similar progress to their peers because they receive well-focused support from teachers and teaching assistants and are included in the full range of activities offered by the school.

Pupils feel exceptionally safe in school and they have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a wide range of situations including the use of modern technology. Exemplary behaviour in assemblies, around the school and in lessons reflects pupils' thoughtfulness and consideration of others. High numbers of pupils participate in out-of-school hours sporting activities. Lunchtime monitors enthusiastically promote healthy eating by encouraging younger pupils to eat well. Pupils are very proud of and committed to their school. They have a very strong voice in the school and all groups of pupils are well represented on the highly active eco-warriors group and the school council. Pupils enjoy many activities that involve working alongside members of the local and church communities. They raise considerable sums for charity and other good causes. High numbers of pupils apply their well developed literacy, numeracy and ICT skills very effectively to organise school events such as the Fair Trade week. Pupils think deeply about the messages they hear in assemblies and know how to use this time for reflection and prayer.

They are respectful of one another and, through the wide-ranging curriculum, have a good knowledge and understanding of people from different cultures and backgrounds. Opportunities for communication and direct contact with people from different cultures are more limited.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Pupils thoroughly enjoy lessons and say they are fun and challenging. Teachers' high expectations of pupils' learning, exceptionally well-planned activities that match pupils' needs and a very good pace to most lessons support their outstanding progress. Teachers' skilful questioning probes and delves into pupils' thinking, challenging them to give full explanations. Teachers select resources carefully to ensure pupils' engagement. For example, the work on legends and fables involving characters such as Robin Hood and Merlin is helping to engage boys in writing. Teaching assistants are very well briefed by teaching staff so that support is tightly focused on pupils' needs, whether working with the less-able or more-able pupils.

Lesson objectives and success criteria are made very clear to pupils so they understand the purpose of lessons. Pupils have clear individual targets for literacy and numeracy that guide their work. Targets for writing are used exceptionally well to focus pupils on improving their work when they are writing in subjects across the curriculum. Teachers' marking is consistently effective so that pupils know how well they are doing and what the next steps are. Pupils are often involved in assessing their own learning and they respond positively to teachers' guidance.

Progression in the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT is exceptionally well planned and taught across the subjects of the curriculum and integrated into themes that are of great interest to pupils. Highly effective partnerships with local providers in the arts, music, sport and history enrich the curriculum and provide exciting and memorable experiences. These include highly successful school shows that involve all pupils, and music and arts projects that include visiting specialists and opportunities

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

to work with people from across the generations within the local community. Extensive extra-curricular activities involve most pupils and promote pupils' health and well-being exceptionally well.

The school provides a highly welcoming environment and staff know the pupils and their families very well. Exceptionally supportive relationships mean that pupils have great confidence in the staff. In partnership with other agencies, the school goes that 'extra-mile' to seek and provide the support needed for all pupils, including those with complex needs and those who speak English as an additional language. Support as pupils move from class-to-class is very effective in helping them to feel happy and settled. Staff recognise that for some younger pupils there is a dip in performance following the long summer break. Opportunities have not yet been taken to share this information with parents and carers or seek ways of working with families to help children and pupils to continue to develop and learn over long holiday periods.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, greatly supported by leaders, staff and the governing body, sets a clear agenda that is determined and successful in maintaining excellence in academic performance and in giving pupils every opportunity to blossom in wider achievements and their personal development. There is no complacency. Systematic and rigorous monitoring of pupils' progress and school provision underpins planning and priorities. Improvements to teaching and learning are a continual priority and staff expertise is often used to lead well-focused, in-service training and professional development. Arrangements for the performance management of staff are very tightly linked to school priorities.

The governing body is highly supportive of the school's work. Members of the governing body bring a great deal of expertise to their role, supporting, for example, the development of the interactive electronic links between home and school that have successfully improved the engagement of parents and carers and developed pupils' independent learning skills. Links between members of the governing body and subjects within the school support their systematic monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school. However, there is an over-reliance on reports from the headteacher for information relating to the impact of specific targets within the school improvement plan on pupils' outcomes.

Child protection is given high priority and policies and procedures relating to safeguarding are robust. Roles and responsibilities are extremely clear and all staff have received good quality up-to-date training. The school has benefited from

expertise within the governing body in compiling exceptionally thorough risk assessments. The school meets the requirements for the vetting of staff.

Equality of opportunity and inclusion are at the heart of all that the school does. Differences between people are valued. All groups of pupils achieve exceptionally well, including the more-able pupils, and where there have been differences, for example, between boys' and girls' performance in writing, these are recognised and tackled quickly and successfully. The school's policy for community cohesion includes an accurate audit of its place in the local, national and global communities. Pupils have many opportunities to meet and work alongside different groups in the local community. Although they know about different religions and cultures nationally and globally, opportunities to meet and communicate with people from such backgrounds are more limited.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account:	
The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
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	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
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	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are very happy and enjoy learning a great deal. Excellent arrangements have helped children to settle in quickly and help their parents and carers to become familiar with the setting and the school's expectations. Children have adopted classroom routines quickly and they are proud to take on responsibilities such as helping with the snack at break-time, and they understand the need for a healthy diet. Children behave exceptionally well and show high levels of independence, curiosity and imagination. They play and work collaboratively very well indeed. They love role play and two boys thoroughly enjoyed dressing up as a dentist with masks and protective gloves while an adult participated with them in role play and encouraged their talk.

The welcoming and highly stimulating setting provides a rich variety of activities and resources. These are very well planned to ensure progress in all areas of learning, both indoors and outdoors, and the balance between activities led by adults and those chosen by the children is finely tuned. Staff are highly aware of what excites and interests children and adapt their planning accordingly. For example, on a very windy day children were thrilled to play with large chiffon scarves and adults took every opportunity to develop their language skills and creativity. Adults lead and

support children's learning skilfully because observation and assessment identifies their needs early on and helps them to challenge children to take the next steps in learning. Most children are confident and articulate and enjoy talking about what they are doing. By the time children enter Year 1 children have made at least good progress in all areas of learning and have developed strong literacy and numeracy skills. Leaders ensure that welfare arrangements are robustly in place. Leaders' close analysis of the outcomes for children helps to accurately identify areas for further improvement.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Views of parents and carers

An above average proportion of parents and carers returned the questionnaires. The views expressed are highly supportive of the school's work. Inspection evidence confirmed these views. A very few parents and carers expressed concerns about behaviour and bullying and the way it is managed by the school. Others praised the school for the way it deals with unacceptable behaviour. The inspection evidence found that behaviour is outstanding overall and that on the very few occasions where it was not acceptable, the school managed situations well.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ecclestone St Mary'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 114 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 206 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	78	68	29	25	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	86	75	24	21	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	60	53	49	43	3	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	62	54	43	38	1	1	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	69	61	42	37	0	0	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	59	52	49	43	4	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	64	56	49	43	0	0	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)	68	60	41	36	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	62	54	46	40	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	59	52	42	37	5	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	59	52	46	40	3	3	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	77	68	35	31	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	76	67	35	31	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 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 2010/11 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.



7 October 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Eccleston St Mary's Church of England Primary School,
Chorley, PR7 5TE**

Thank you for the welcome you gave to me and my colleagues. We enjoyed hearing your views and seeing you at work in lessons. Your school is outstanding in most respects. It enables all of you to achieve your very best and make a real contribution to the community. Your attainment has improved even more since the previous inspection and is now consistently high. You are a real credit to your school. Your behaviour and attitudes towards learning are outstanding. You make the most of all of the excellent opportunities the school has to offer. You tell us that you feel very safe and well protected in school because you have confidence in all the staff and that they are there to help and support you. You make very rapid progress and your achievement is outstanding because the teaching and the curriculum are excellent and ensure that all your different needs are met.

Your headteacher, leaders, staff and the governing body work very hard to continually look for what needs to be improved and they are never content to say that there is nothing more to do. In order to improve your school even further we have asked your headteacher and leaders to:

- look even more carefully at how all of you are making progress throughout the school in order to determine how well their plans for improvement have worked
- find ways of working with your parents and carers to ensure that there is no dip in your performance following a long holiday, especially for the younger pupils.

You play a key role in the success of your school. Please continue to enjoy all that the school offers and keep on trying your very best.

I wish you all the very best for your futures.

Yours sincerely

Gillian Salter-Smith
Lead inspector

