

St Luke's RC Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105966
Local authority	Salford
Inspection number	377335
Inspection dates	16–17 May 2012
Lead inspector	Lyn Pender

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	352
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Father John Williams
Headteacher	Mr Paul Jameson
Date of previous school inspection	4 February 2009
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Introduction

Inspection team

Lyn Pender
Philip Martin
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Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors visited 17 lessons and parts of lessons and observed 15 teachers. Meetings were held with parents, groups of pupils, and members of staff and the governing body. Inspectors listened to pupils read and discussed the work they have been doing in class this academic year. They also observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents including the school self-evaluation summary and improvement plan, safeguarding evidence and minutes of governing body meetings. Inspectors analysed 128 questionnaires received from parents and carers as well as questionnaires completed by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

This school is larger than most primary schools. There are fifteen classes, including part-time Nursery classes and some mixed-aged classes in Key Stage 2. The number of pupils admitted to the Early Years Foundation Stage has risen since the previous inspection. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. Most pupils are from a White British background and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled pupils or those supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is much lower than average. A number of long-serving staff have left the school since the time of the last inspection and membership of the senior leadership team has been reorganised. The school holds Healthy School status. The school meets the current floor standards, which set the government's minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This good school has made significant improvement since the previous inspection. It is well placed to improve further. It is not yet outstanding because teaching is good rather than outstanding and pupils' current achievement is also good rather than outstanding. Parents, carers, pupils and staff agree that this is a very happy school where pupils are well cared for and kept safe.
- Pupils make good progress from relatively low starting points and their attainment at the end of Year 6 is broadly average and improving. The school is acting effectively to identify and close any gaps in achievement between different groups of pupils. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also achieve well.
- Teaching is good. The pace of learning is usually brisk but sometimes pupils are capable of producing more work than teachers expect of them. In a minority of lessons the content of lessons does not fully interest and engage pupils.
- Pupils' enthusiasm for school is reflected in their excellent behaviour and positive attitudes to school life. They make a very positive contribution to the school community and are passionate ambassadors for their school. Cooperative working is strong in all classes.
- The headteacher has an ambitious vision based on a secure understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Levels of accountability of all staff are high and staff performance is managed well. Monitoring of teaching is robust and improvement is embraced by staff. Pupils' progress is comprehensively tracked and additional support targeted well. However, a succinct overview of this information is not yet available for sharing with the governing body and other relevant stakeholders. Leaders are aware that the curriculum, though overall is good, does not provide a wide enough range of rich, enjoyable and memorable experiences that the school feels the pupils deserve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Reinforce the ongoing drive to raise achievement and increase the proportion of outstanding teaching so that pupils may learn and progress rapidly in all lessons by:
 - providing a wider range of activities to interest and engage all pupils
 - confirming that teachers' consistently high expectations ensure a brisk pace and enable pupils to produce their best work in all lessons.
- Strengthen the impact of leadership and management by:
 - further developing the curriculum to provide a greater range of interesting, memorable and challenging experiences which will excite and engage all pupils
 - summarising the progress pupils make each term in reading, writing and mathematics to provide an improved overview of how well pupils are doing.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils take pride in their work and come to school eager to learn. They work hard and enjoy learning in collaborative activities. They present their work neatly.

Children enter the Nursery class with skills below those expected for their age and then make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They enter Year 1 at the expected level for age. This has not always been the case with older pupils in Key Stage 2 having entered Year 1 at lower starting points than currently. This means that by achieving broadly average attainment by the end of Year 6, their progress has been good. The most striking aspect of the improvement in pupils' overall attainment has been the better achievement of more-able pupils in both Key Stages 1 and 2

By the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 attainment in reading is average and continuing to improve because the school's provision for teaching letters and sounds is effective. Pupils display a genuine love of reading. Attainment and progress in mathematics are also improving as a result of recent actions to improve teaching in this subject. Pupils' confidence in solving number problems has improved and they work accurately. Pupils' writing skills are improving well. For example, in Year 2 pupils were able to pose their own questions, with some empathy, when writing as part of their history topic about the Titanic disaster. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs also make good progress because of well-focused interventions that support their learning. More-able pupils now make at least good progress and attain well at the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Every parent and carer who returned the inspection questionnaires rightly felt that their children were making good progress at the school, and that their needs were very well met.

Quality of teaching

The inspection findings support the views expressed by parents and carers that teaching is good. Lessons are planned with clear learning intentions and include a range of strategies to involve and engage pupils. Teachers' subject knowledge and questioning skills are good and

are used effectively to develop pupils' understanding well. Partner work often leads to thoughtful and reflective written work.

Much of the teaching seen by inspectors was good with some outstanding lessons. Work in pupils' books over time confirms this overall picture but across the school there are some variations. In the best lessons the pace of learning was lively with high expectations for pupils' work output. In a few lessons pupils were allowed to produce less work than they were capable of and so their achievement was less than it might have been. In a few others, the lesson did not engage the interest of pupils well enough.

Teaching is effective in the Early Years Foundation Stage where a range of interesting activities and positive relationships enable children to develop confidence and independence and gain an enthusiasm for learning, particularly in reading. Assessment is accurate and is used well to plan next steps and ensure that children are well prepared for Key Stage 1.

In Key Stages 1 and 2 accurate assessments inform teachers' lesson planning well. Pupils know their literacy and numeracy targets. They often assess their own and each other's work accurately, for example through the use of a marking scale. This allows them to identify positive features in their own and each other's work and then go on to think carefully and maturely about how the work can be improved. Teachers' marking provides helpful, and in some cases exceptional, guidance to help pupils improve their work. Teaching assistants are well trained and deployed effectively to support the learning and progress of all pupils.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. The school is a caring, orderly and safe environment and pupils are polite and courteous. They talk with confidence and pride about their school and were keen to share their views with inspectors. Pupils are often enthusiastic participants in lessons. They listen carefully to each other and many show great perseverance when presented with challenging tasks. As one pupil phrased it; 'It's great when the teachers make us think hard!' Pupils of all ages get on very well with each other and older pupils say they enjoy looking after the younger pupils, for example during assembly and at playtimes. Inspectors agree with the views of the overwhelming majority of parents and carers who say that their children feel safe in the school and that behaviour is typically outstanding. These very positive views are endorsed by the inspectors' scrutiny of the school's behaviour logs.

Pupils enjoy taking on responsible roles, such as that of school councillors. They know that their views are important and that their role is to make sure every child has a say in helping the school to improve. They are keen to help design the eagerly awaited new equipment planned for the playground. As they move up the school pupils develop an increasing understanding of many of the different forms of bullying, including those related to racism. They are well aware of potential internet safety issues such as cyber-bullying. Most pupils report that bullying of any kind is very rare, and are confident that if bullying occurs it is dealt with swiftly and firmly by the adults. Pupils are keen to come to school and arrive on time and ready to learn. Attendance is above average.

Leadership and management

The quality of leadership is good. Morale is high and staff wholeheartedly agree that the school is well led and managed. The high esteem in which the headteacher and his staff are held is reflected in the many positive comments provided by parents and carers who completed the inspection questionnaires.

The school has an accurate view of its strengths and has identified the correct issues for development. Clear plans for action are in place focused on the correct issues for development with ambitious targets for improvement. The positive impact of strategic planning can be seen for example in improved overall achievement including the outcomes of higher achievers who are now attaining well. Leaders track progress regularly, observe lessons and monitor pupils' books so they have a clear overview of achievement across the school. An appropriate professional development programme is in place to support improvement. Pupils' progress is reviewed every half term but the information this provides is not summarised concisely enough to enable all stakeholders, including the supportive governing body, to have a clear and ongoing overview of achievement across the school. However, leaders use the information effectively to identify if individuals and groups of pupils require additional support. This is helping to close gaps in attainment and to ensure that all groups of learners achieve well. Middle leaders have embraced their role in leading the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics very effectively. The school has good capacity to improve further.

The curriculum is generally good and makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils show mature and thoughtful attitudes when given opportunities to reflect on, and discuss, important issues. Older pupils, for example, produced some very thoughtful responses to injustice when considering the life of Martin Luther King. However, school leaders have identified the need to develop an even more vibrant curriculum so that pupils' interests are always fully engaged and to provide enhanced support to learning and progress. Pupils enjoy the after-school clubs and the visits which are arranged to help them gain first-hand experiences linked to the curriculum. The governing body ensures that all statutory requirements for safeguarding are in place, equality is promoted well and discrimination is not tolerated.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



18 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Luke's RC Primary School, Salford, M6 7WR

Thank you for being so welcoming and friendly to the team when we visited your school. Everyone we met was very polite and helpful and we enjoyed talking to you and visiting you in lessons. We were impressed by your excellent behaviour and by the way you care for each other. You told us that you enjoy school.

You go to a good school. You make good progress throughout the school and you reach average attainment by the end of Year 6 because of good teaching. We looked at your books and found that you work hard, take pride in your work and present your work neatly. The teachers mark your work carefully and help you understand how to improve. Your headteacher and the other staff have helped the school improve since the last inspection. They understand what the school is doing well and what can be made even better.

To help your school to improve even more, I have asked your headteacher and the governing body to:

- help you to learn quickly and do your very best in lessons
- find ways to make the curriculum even more exciting and interesting
- make sure the school's governors and others have an overview of how well you are all doing.

You can help by always trying hard in lessons. I hope you continue to enjoy school and attend regularly.

Yours sincerely

Lyn Pender
Lead Inspector

