



St Andrew's Church of England Primary School, Ramsbottom

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 105326
LEA Bury
Inspection number 277337
Inspection dates 26 September 2005 to 27 September 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs Paula Allison CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Nuttall Lane Ramsbottom Bury, Lancashire BL0 9JD
School category	Voluntary controlled	Telephone number	01706 822649
Age range of pupils	4 to 11	Fax number	01706 829949
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Chair of governors	Canon Rogerson
Number on roll	243	Headteacher	Mr C Cliffe
Appropriate authority	The governing body		
Date of previous inspection	10 October 2000		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a popular, average-sized school with a Christian foundation. Virtually all children are of white British ethnic background. The percentage of children eligible for free school meals is below average. However, the socio-economic circumstances of pupils are very mixed and, whilst the overall percentage of children with learning difficulties is not very high, that of children with statements of special educational need is above average. Overall, attainment on entry is average.

The school has substantial before and after school childcare provision, which was inspected alongside the inspection of the school.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St Andrew's is a good school, with some outstanding features. Inspectors agree with the school that it is effective and it provides good value for money. Children enjoy school and make good progress. Standards are above average overall, but not as high in writing as they are elsewhere. Parents and children are very happy with what the school offers. Children receive a first class standard of care and are guided very effectively in their personal development, which results in them being exceptionally keen to learn and behaving in an exemplary manner. The school provides well for children in the reception class. The wide range of activities and the good quality of support from adults help the children make good progress in all areas of learning. The quality of teaching in the school is good. The range and quality of activities outside lessons are outstanding.

The headteacher provides clear direction and gives a positive lead in the values the school promotes. He is very well supported by the deputy head and senior staff, and by governors. The school's self-evaluation is well considered and largely accurate. The leaders have established good systems for measuring children's attainment and strive to tackle weaknesses shown in national test results. They do not, however, have a clear enough overview of the progress children are making from one year to the next. The school has improved well since the last inspection and has excellent capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue with the strategies that have been put in place, to ensure that the improvements in standards in writing are maintained.
- Develop further the good assessment systems by focusing more on children's progress from year to year so that potential weaknesses can be identified and tackled at an early stage.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The standards reached by children are good. Standards reached by Year 6 pupils in 2005 national tests were particularly high. The school sets challenging targets, which are usually reached. Children are developing the skills in literacy and numeracy they need for the future. The school is justly proud of the high standards in other areas, such as physical education and the performing arts. However, recently, a weakness in writing has been noticeable.

Inspectors agree with the school's evaluation that children make good progress. Information from the school's own assessments shows that, from their starting points, children make good progress in the reception class and in Years 1 and 2. In 2003, children in Years 3 to 6 appeared to make only satisfactory progress, given their prior attainment. The situation is better now, and children achieve well in the school to

reach the standards they do by the end of Year 6. However the school does not yet have the accurate picture of progress, as opposed to standards, to prevent this happening again.

The effectiveness of the school's provision and the focus on the individual ensure that all pupils make equally good progress. The school's own assessments indicate that children with learning difficulties achieve well from their own starting points, although this progress does not always show up in results from national tests. Letters written to the inspectors show that parents of these children greatly appreciate the progress their children make in this school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children's personal development is outstanding and is even better than the school judges it to be. Children obviously enjoy school, for example, "my teacher does a lot of fun activities in lessons and I like learning new things" said one child. Attendance is much better than for most schools. From the time they start school, children absorb the values that learning is enjoyable, working well together is important, and taking on responsibility is exciting. By Year 6, children have outstanding attitudes to their work, behave impeccably and exhibit respectful relationships.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very effectively and the school is active in encouraging healthy lifestyles. Eating healthily and exercising regularly are part of the daily life of the school. The Fruity Friday Tuck Shop, set up and run by school council members, emphasises healthy eating and also provides opportunities to develop economic awareness. Children are very clear about the need to keep themselves safe. They say that bullying is rare and are confident that any problems are dealt with immediately. Older children keep the younger ones happy and safe through the Buddy system. One child said "I play with my buddy all the time because he does not have friends yet". Children make a positive contribution to the community, particularly through strong links with the neighbouring church and by participating in local sporting events.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall, which confirms the school's evaluation. Lessons are generally lively and interesting, which prompts a very good response from the children, who are eager to participate. Teachers explain new ideas clearly and they question children skilfully to find out what they know and what they still need to learn. Teachers' management of children, based on excellent relationships, is an outstanding feature. These strengths mean that children enjoy learning and make at least good progress in most lessons. Support staff are very skilled in promoting the learning of individuals and small groups, which boosts children's progress considerably. Parents

say they feel well involved in their children's learning. Teachers assess children's learning effectively, to gain a picture of what they already know and what they need to learn next. This information is used well to plan future learning, to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met by the work they are given to do. In some classes, teachers use target setting successfully to involve the children in monitoring their own progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school that the curriculum is good. It is effectively planned to help all children, whatever their needs, to build their skills and knowledge step by step. Since the last inspection, provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved considerably, helped by some impressively successful fundraising by the Parents and Friends Association. The emphasis on physical education and the expressive arts, and French lessons for the older children, are examples of how well the curriculum is enriched. Activities outside lessons are outstanding in range and quality. They are well attended, and much appreciated by children and parents. The personal, social and health education programme is effective in terms of the good skills children have by Year 6, although it is not consistently implemented in all classes. Health issues, such as sex education and the effects of drugs, are dealt with on an informal basis. The curriculum very successfully meets the needs of children with learning difficulties. The high-quality plans for their children's learning, the good range of programmes and skilled support from staff all contribute to their good progress. Children with particular gifts and talents have been identified, but suitable programmes of work have not yet been properly developed.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

This aspect is outstanding and even better than the school's own evaluation. Levels of care are first rate, and staff are meticulous in ensuring that each child is safe and happy. Parents really appreciate this: "I am happy to leave her in their care", said one parent. The children say they feel cared for: "the teachers listen to what you have to say and they help you". This feeling of confidence makes a very strong contribution to children's personal development and their enjoyment of learning, so that all feel fully included. Staff implement effectively the good procedures for first aid and child protection, and governors are vigilant about health and safety checks. Support and guidance for children's learning are good. Staff are very aware of individual children's needs and provide effective guidance to help them improve, both orally and through positive marking of work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The team agrees with the school that it is well led and managed. The headteacher sets high standards and is particularly effective in promoting the positive ethos that has

such a major impact on children's personal development and attitudes and so is appreciated by parents. The deputy headteacher provides effective support and is very successful in leading school development. The quality of the current leadership team is a key factor in the school's capacity to improve. Governors are effective. They have a good knowledge of the school's work and a clear idea of the values they want for the school. A major strength of the leadership and management is the focus on providing for children as individuals, ensuring that they all have equal access and are fully included in all the school offers.

Self-evaluation is well considered and the views of everyone involved with the school, including parents and children, are taken into account. The leadership team are highly skilled at analysing test results and identifying and remedying any weaknesses. For example, the fall in standards in writing is being tackled effectively. Systems for tracking children's progress are developing well. However, currently the school does not have a secure overview of how well children are progressing from year to year, to spot and deal with potential weaknesses at an early stage. The school is well staffed and has a particularly high level of support staff, all of whom are effective in promoting children's learning. The school is well resourced and the accommodation has been transformed over the years through imaginative development of the existing building, and now provides a very attractive environment for learning.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

As you know, two inspectors recently visited your school to find out how well your teachers are helping you with your learning.

Thank you for being so friendly and for talking to the inspectors. We enjoyed our visit to your school. It was interesting to listen to what you had to say and finding out what you think about your school.

We agree with you that the school is a good one and is giving you the sort of education that you should receive. The things we think are really good about your school are:

- the amount of learning you do and how successful you are in the yearly tests
- the way you behave in school and how much you enjoy learning
- the support you get from all the adults in the school and how they look after you and keep you safe
- how the school helps you to be responsible and friendly to others and to be healthy.
- how well the headteacher and the other teachers look after the school and try to make it even better
- the good teaching that helps you to learn.

We have asked your teachers to improve these things to make your school even better:

- we want them to help you to continue to improve your writing
- we want them to check on how well you are doing in your learning as you move from one class to another.

Thank you for helping us with the inspection of your school. We hope that you carry on enjoying your lessons and being a part of such a good school.