



St Hugh's CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 105699
LEA Oldham
Inspection number 277392
Inspection dates 26 June 2006 to 27 June 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Ian Thompson CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Wildmoor Avenue
School category	Voluntary aided		Holts
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Oldham, Lancashire OL4 5NZ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 9113171
Number on roll	184	Fax number	0161 9113172
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs A Minnis
Date of previous inspection	13 November 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Lynne Burnley

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This small school serves an area of social and economic deprivation. Eligibility for free school meals is much higher than usual. The great majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds; very few are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average, but falling. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need is well below average. More pupils join or leave the school during the year than is usually the case. Since the last inspection, the school has gone through a period of considerable staffing and management changes.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school has been turned around after a period of decline and now provides a good quality of education. The school's evaluation of all aspects of its work matches inspection findings except where it has been modest in evaluating its overall effectiveness, teaching and learning, pupils' achievement and the quality of provision in the Foundation Stage. It provides good value for money. Achievement is good in relation to pupils' starting points and, as recent results show, standards are improving. The school's Christian values underpin its work and contribute significantly to its calm, supportive learning atmosphere.

Pupils, including those who arrive at other than the usual times, are helped to settle in the school and to achieve well as they move through it by good care, guidance and support. The care provided for vulnerable pupils is outstanding.

The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is outstanding, so that pupils make exceptional progress in social development, and are well prepared for their life in the school. Building on this flying start, pupils' personal development and well-being are good throughout.

Good teaching and learning promote good progress. Teachers work hard to meet the diverse needs of pupils. In an otherwise positive picture, marking is inconsistent in telling pupils what they need to do to improve. Because it is not yet fully established, assessment information is not always used well enough to identify gaps in pupils' understanding before they move on to the next stage of learning.

The curriculum is good with a wealth of enrichment activities that are designed to broaden pupils' experience and boost their confidence.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's exceptional leadership, ably supported by a strong senior management team, is promoting improvement in all of the school's work. Governors support the school well and it has a good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of marking so that pupils' consistently understand what they need to do to improve.
- Make better use of assessment data to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding that are essential to the next stage of their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. Pupils enter the school with well below average standards, many with very low standards of communication, language and literacy. A substantial minority show difficulties in personal, social and emotional development that persist for some through the Foundation Stage. Nevertheless, the great majority make exceptional

progress in the Foundation Stage towards most of the early learning goals. Many make very good progress in developing communication skills, although standards of literacy and numeracy remain well below average at the beginning of Year 1. School data shows that standards at the end of Year 2 are improving and moving closer to the national average, particularly in reading and writing which have been a focus for school improvement planning. Provisional results for national tests in 2006 at the end of Year 6 for mathematics and science also show a marked improvement, reflecting the school's successful efforts to promote pupils' progress through the use of assessment and target setting. Although girls do better than boys, the gap in performance is closing as a result of the school's success in raising boys' achievement through changes in teaching methods. The school's data analysis confirms that the majority of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those at an early stage of learning English, make good progress in relation to their starting points. Work seen during the inspection shows that pupils are achieving well as a result of good teaching and the high level of support that they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. They come to school keen to learn and prepared to work hard. Attendance is improving because pupils see the importance of coming to school regularly. At the same time, unauthorised absences have decreased. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is

good. Pupils develop a sense of wonder, for example, by watching butterflies emerge from a chrysalis or reflecting on others' achievements in art or music during assemblies. They respect their teachers and one another, behave well and are increasingly aware of the importance of racial harmony. The recently elected school council is actively promoting healthy lifestyles. It has changed the way pupils think about unsuitable snacks and run a healthy tuck shop during morning break. A wide choice of sports activities encourages fitness. Most pupils learn to swim. Pupils make a positive contribution to their community by doing jobs that help the day to day running of the school. The school choir and band have made their mark within the wider community by entertaining the more senior residents. Charity fund-raising and helping at the school Autumn Fayre also help pupils acquire some of the important life skills they need to help secure their future well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The key to pupils' good progress lies in the supportive relationships that teachers develop with their pupils. Their consistent expectations of work and behaviour contribute to pupils' good progress. Pupils learn well because teachers give them the confidence to do their best so that the great

majority work hard. Teachers are good at planning work that challenges pupils. However, the school is aware that assessment is not always used well enough to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge that are essential for them to move on to the next stage of their learning. Time targets are used well to create a sense of urgency in lessons, maintain pace and to keep pupils concentrating on the job in hand. The use of 'talking partners' helps pupils to explore their ideas with each other and helps to build their confidence. Classroom support assistants and the learning mentor make a significant contribution to pupils' progress. Those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported particularly well so that they make similarly good progress to their classmates. Marking is always supportive but does not consistently tell pupils how to improve their work, although there is some good practice, for example, in Year 6.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The quality of the curriculum is good. It is planned well to ensure good breadth and is enhanced by the inclusion of French. Time spent on practical activities balances well with other work and pupils have opportunities to apply their various skills across a range of subjects to make learning more purposeful. Provision for those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities has improved and, along with other groups of vulnerable pupils, they are well supported. Work is planned thoughtfully to match pupils' varying needs and abilities; consequently, their achievement is good. There is an outstanding range of opportunities for pupils to improve their skills and gain first-hand experiences to enrich their learning. Visits to places of interest and visitors to school, as well as an exciting selection of after school clubs, have helped to nurture talented musicians, sports enthusiasts, chess champions and artists. The curriculum for personal health and social education is well established, ensuring pupils' awareness of potential hazards outside of school and the importance of trusting relationships.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school takes good care of its pupils. The help provided for the most vulnerable pupils is outstanding. Liaison with parents and sensitive support in school have contributed greatly to improved attendance and behaviour. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. 'St Hugh's is improving all the time' is their commonly held view as they speak about the positive impact on their children's confidence and self-esteem. Pupils' health and safety are given paramount importance. Good child protection procedures are in place and staff, including occasional helpers, are checked as to their suitability to work with children. Essential risk assessments and safety checks on the building are robust. The transfer of Year 6 pupils to the next stage of their education is well managed because of the productive links between schools. Systems for monitoring progress and setting targets are becoming well established and pupils appreciate the help they get from teachers' marking.

Nevertheless, assessments do not always pinpoint gaps in pupils' learning, making it more difficult to build on progress from class to class.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Since her appointment, the headteacher has shown exceptionally good leadership in bringing stability to the school after a period of decline. She has established a vision for the school that is showing results in pupils' improving standards and achievement. Responses to questionnaires show that the school has earned the overwhelming support of parents. Good progress has been made in dealing with the issues from the last inspection and the school has a good capacity for further improvement. Nevertheless, the school is aware that there is still work to do, for example, in fully establishing the use of assessment to support learning. Senior staff provide good support for the headteacher, leading by example and promoting high standards through setting challenging targets for improvement. They monitor the school's performance well and take prompt action to deal with identified weaknesses.

The governing body is well informed about the school's performance. They provide good links with the wider community that enable the school to respond to needs and opinions. Governors have shown their astute understanding of the school's long term needs in making the three senior appointments of headteacher, deputy head teacher and Foundation Stage manager that have been instrumental in turning the school around.

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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	1	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	3	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?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	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?	2	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, Mr Johnson and I visited your school to check on how well it is doing.

Thank you very much for the way you welcomed us into your school. We enjoyed talking to you about your work and your life in the school. We were very impressed by the courtesy and help you gave us - you were a credit to your school. We agree with you that it is a good school and that it is a safe and happy place where everyone can enjoy learning.

The best things about the school are:

- the really good progress younger pupils make when they first come to school
- you make good progress through the school because you behave well and work hard in lessons
- everyone in the school cares for you well and you know you can get help with any difficulties
- you get on well together and help each other
- there are lots of extra activities that you enjoy; through music and other activities you give a lot to the school and its community.

We have asked your teachers to improve some things to make your school an even better place to learn. These are:

- to make sure that when your work is marked, you know exactly what to do to make it better
- to make sure that you know and understand everything you need to before you move on to your next class.

Thank you for helping us with our work. We hope that you carry on enjoying lessons and continue to help Mrs Burnley and your teachers to make St Hugh's an even better place to learn.