



# Eccleston St Mary's Church of England Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 119472  
**LEA** Lancashire  
**Inspection number** 280568  
**Inspection dates** 21 November 2005 to 22 November 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Eric Jackson

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	The Green,
<b>School category</b>	Community		Eccleston,
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Chorley, , Lancashire,
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01257 451317
<b>Number on roll</b>	193	<b>Fax number</b>	01257 453606
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Rev Ian Templeton
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 October 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Bill Mann

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

St Mary's is an average sized voluntary aided Church of England primary school. There are small numbers of children of Traveller, British Indian and mixed heritage.

Socio-economic circumstances locally are above average. A small number of children have learning difficulties. There are links with local specialist colleges for art, information and communication technology (ICT), languages and sport. The school is working towards Healthy Schools status and has achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

St Mary's is a good school with some outstanding features. Inspectors agree with school's own evaluation. Very good partnerships with parents, other schools and organisations enrich children's learning very effectively. Provision is good in the Foundation Stage (reception). Children build well on their good attainment at entry to achieve above average levels by Year 1. By Year 6, standards are well above average. The school's self-evaluation is thorough and accurate. Its strengths maintained since the last inspection, the school is well placed to make further improvements. It provides good value for money.

The headteacher and key staff provide excellent leadership, well supported by the governing body. Children's achievement is good, and they reach high standards by Year 6 in national tests. Their behaviour and attitudes are exceptional in response to the school's high expectations for their learning, that are underpinned by the positive Christian ethos that pervades every aspect of school life. Children say that they love the school, evident in their enthusiastic response to good teaching. However, they are not sufficiently independent in their learning. Teaching is occasionally excellent, such as in music for Year 2, or writing poetry in Year 4. In general, though, children in the infants do not write for sustained periods often enough, slowing progress, especially among the boys.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Give children more independence in their learning to improve their personal development.
- Quicken progress in writing in Years 1 and 2, particularly among the boys.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Standards are consistently high by the end of Year 6, and achievement from entry is good. In Year 6 national tests, the school's results are in the top 15% nationally. In 2004, progress was broadly in line with that in similar schools, improved from 2003, and well above the national average. Challenging targets were achieved in 2005 tests in English, mathematics and science, and exceeded at higher levels. Children with learning difficulties achieve well towards the targets set for them, as do those from minority ethnic groups.

Children enter reception with above average attainment overall in most areas of learning. They make good progress and reach above average levels in the goals expected by the time they enter Year 1.

Standards were well above average overall in Year 2 national tests in 2005 in reading and mathematics. However, standards fell to average levels in writing because no child achieved the higher Level 3 in the test, continuing a trend for boys. A significant proportion of these children now in Year 3 clearly achieve this level in their writing.

The school has also focused on the development of writing skills this year in Years 1 and 2 with some success. Current standards are well above average in Year 2 and achievement is good.

Children achieve well across the school in other subjects such as ICT, art and design, music and physical education, reaching high standards by Year 6.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Children's personal development is good: their attitudes and behaviour are outstanding. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, and sometimes exceptional. For example, a whole school assembly about working together included moments of deep spirituality and reflection for the children. They enjoy their work very much, commented on strongly by Year 6 children. Parents wholeheartedly agree.

Attendance is high, contributing well to children's good progress. Many children show a keen interest in the varied learning opportunities offered. Many examples of work in art, poetry and music show striking individual creativity, persistence and attention to detail.

Children feel safe in school. They are confident that they will be supported by staff and their friends should any difficulties occur. They understand the importance of healthy lifestyles, and fully accept the school's encouragement to eat healthily and take regular exercise. Although the children take responsibilities in school willingly, and contribute well to the school, parish and wider community, they have too few opportunities to exercise independence and follow their own ideas in lessons. While this limits this aspect of their personal development, they nonetheless develop good social and cooperative skills to help them later in the world of work.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good, with some outstanding features. Progress in English, mathematics and science is good because the teachers are knowledgeable about the curriculum in these subjects and they have very high expectations of children's commitment, concentration and potential. The high quality learning relationships fostered allow lessons to proceed well. However, the teaching does not offer infant children enough opportunities to write for sustained periods about topics or stories that interest them.

Some of the music teaching is superb, led by an advanced skills teacher. Since beginning in September, all the Year 4 children and their teachers have already progressed sufficiently to perform as an ensemble. This is part of a 'Wider Opportunities' music programme in collaboration with the local authority music service.

A real strength of teaching is in the wide variety of opportunities very effectively planned by the teachers, including tasks pitched at a high level in art and design and physical education (PE). For example, children in the reception class squealed with pleasure as they sang and danced a hedgehog song in the hall, then buried themselves for the winter amongst imaginary leaves.

The teachers are developing new assessment methods that involve children more closely in understanding what they need to do to improve. This is effective in work planned directly by the teachers, but does not cover some aspects of children's personal development.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is of good quality, with very good enrichment activities through clubs, visits and visitors to school. It concentrates on English, mathematics and science, but teachers have formed links with local specialist colleges to promote a good curriculum in ICT, the arts, languages and PE. The school provides well for children with learning difficulties and those requiring extra challenge. Teachers with expertise in specific subjects, such as art, music or PE, share their skills well across the school. Major developments are planned to review and revise the curriculum. This is timely because some general skills such as those for literacy are not always considered sufficiently in planning for other subjects.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides good care, support and guidance for its children. The strong Christian ethos of care from the dedicated staff team protects each individual child. Health and safety procedures are rigorous for all activities. The after-school club is popular, and commented on very warmly by parents.

Teachers identify those children needing extra help quickly and focus on their strengths to help them improve in weaker areas. A Year 6 child said, 'The staff take you seriously if you think you've got a problem'. Vulnerable children have effective personal development plans agreed with their parents or carers.

Specific targets are set for children in English, mathematics and science, and the teachers mark the children's work with these in mind. Children say that this helps them to know what to do to improve. An outstanding bank of exemplar children's work has been assembled by the teachers to help them and parents understand different levels of achievement in different subjects at each stage of learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. Leadership by key leaders is excellent, providing very clear direction for the school's work and its continued development, including a

clear focus on maintaining or raising standards in all areas. The headteacher has a strong influence on the outstanding ethos for learning and the school's excellent inclusive practices.

Management is good, ensuring that school routines work effectively. Staff with management responsibilities, including support and administrative staff, do a good job. Evaluation and monitoring procedures are good, and plans made are followed through. The areas for improvement identified in the inspection have already been recognised by the school and included in current development plans. The school is well placed to continue to improve, and provides good value for money.

Governors are effectively involved, and both support and challenge the school well. Parents and pupils are consulted regularly, and their views are taken into account. A School Council is being established this term to strengthen the children's involvement.

The school's resources are deployed well, including the good involvement of support staff in ensuring children's progress. There are outstanding links with other groups to enrich children's learning, and the school is active in promoting high standards in its local cluster of schools. It has a well-deserved high reputation locally.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1	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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	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	2	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

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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**

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23 November 2005

Dear Children

Thank you all for welcoming my colleague, Mrs Parrish, and myself so warmly to your school. We very much enjoyed seeing what you do and talking about it with you.

As you know, our job is to see how well your school helps you to learn all the things you should, and keeps you safe and healthy. We agree with you and your parents – St Mary's is a good school with some really good things going on. We were very impressed by how well you get on together, how well you behave, and how hard you work. That is a great credit to you, your parents and the staff.

What impressed us was how much you enjoy being at school. We loved seeing the reception children being hedgehogs hiding in the leaves, the older children enthusiastically practising netball in the mist, and the Year 4 'Big Band' doing so well in playing together (including the staff!) We also liked the art work round the school, especially the self-portraits in Year 1 and in the entrance. You also reach good standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Well done!

We have asked your teachers to:

Give those of you in the infants more chance to write longer stories and descriptions.

Help all of you to be more independent, and use your own ideas more in your work.

You can help by doing what you generally do well already – try your best, and perhaps think about how you can add your own thoughts, plans and ideas to what the staff want you to learn. We feel that the staff work hard to make sure that you all learn as well as you can. They also do a good job in making sure that you are safe and healthy, and enjoy your work and play.

We know that you are preparing for a Christmas production, and that some of your parents are preparing a pantomime. We hope they go well and that you all have a very good Christmas and enjoy the New Year of 2006 when it arrives.

With best wishes for your future,

yours sincerely

Mr Eric Jackson (Lead Inspector) and Mrs Penny Parrish (Additional Inspector).

**Annex B**