



St John with St Mark CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 133929
LEA Bury
Inspection number 282390
Inspection dates 19 September 2005 to 20 September 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs Linda Murphy CFBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Athlone Avenue
School category	Voluntary controlled		Bury
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Lancashire BL9 5EE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 764 5330
Number on roll	289	Fax number	0161 764 5330
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Rev Stamp
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mrs J Moore

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 19 September 2005 - 20 September 2005	Inspection number 282390
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This voluntary controlled Church of England primary school is situated in Bury. It was formed in 2003 from the amalgamation of two Church of England schools. The school is just above average in size with 298 pupils on roll aged 3-11. The school has a high proportion of pupils who join and leave each year other than at the usual times, aged 3 and 11. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is higher than average. The proportion of pupils who have additional learning needs is much the same as most schools. About half of the pupils are of Pakistani heritage and many learn English as an additional language. These proportions are high. The other main groups represented include white British, travellers and asylum seekers. The pupils' attainment on entry is well below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. It judges itself effective and the inspectors agree. The dynamic leadership of the headteacher is a driving force in enabling the school to do well in relation to similar schools in the local authority. Other strengths are in the groundbreaking teamwork and the good quality teaching, which enables pupils to learn at a good rate. As a result, the pupils flourish socially and academically and reach broadly average standards from a well below average starting point. The majority of pupils achieve well, although those pupils who are gifted or talented are not yet fully meeting their potential. The provision in the Foundation Stage is good and the pupils achieve well, although still unlikely to reach the expected standards for their age at the end of the reception year. The pupils' behaviour is outstanding and this reflects the importance the school places on building a school community where individuals count. The staff know the pupils well, but are not using the growing amount of data well enough to set demanding targets for the standards the pupils achieve. The school has made much headway in a short time and the capacity to improve is good. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

The school has already identified that in order to build on its strengths and improve standards it should focus on:

- using assessment, including marking, to monitor the rate of the pupils' progress and set challenging targets for their learning
- making provision for those pupils who have special gifts and talents to ensure they reach their potential.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Many pupils enter the nursery with levels of attainment that are well below those expected for their age. This is particularly evident in their skills at speaking and listening and in their levels of maturity. The pupils achieve well, although not all will meet the goals expected for their age at the end of the reception year particularly in communication, language and literacy. Throughout the school, the pupils make good progress and reach broadly average standards at the end of Year 6. The school's self-evaluation is accurate in judging that the pupils achieve well. In 2005, the school's targets were surpassed and the number of pupils attaining high levels for their ages increased. There is no significant difference between the rates of progress of most groups of pupils. Those who have additional learning needs, learn English as an additional language, travellers and asylum seekers have their needs met equally well during their time in the school. Those pupils who have special gifts or talents are not yet reaching their full potential. Standards in writing are lower than in other aspects of English, but are improving due to the focus the school has given to this and because of the improvements in the quality of teaching.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The school accurately judges that the pupils' personal development is good. Attendance is satisfactory and is rising because the staff make clear to families the value of the education provided in the school. The headteacher visits the few families who need reminders about ensuring their children attend school. This helps share with the local community the high priority that the school gives to regular attendance. The pupils enjoy school and say that education is important to their future. Their views are sought through a range of ways including the work of the school council, which is taken seriously. A healthy life style is promoted well.

In lessons, and around school, the pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They contribute enthusiastically yet are very polite and listen very carefully to each other. They enjoy taking on responsibilities such as being monitors or play leaders, and recognise the importance of these tasks. They have a strong team spirit and strongly support each other in class or sports. They are mature in their understanding of how teams work for the common good because of the effective role models provided by staff.

The school has good systems in place to ensure that pupils of all heritages and backgrounds work well together and show great respect for each other. Good opportunities are provided for children to consider spiritual and moral issues. They show insight and understanding into the feelings of others and have a strong sense of right and wrong. The pupils readily discuss their feelings: one parent summed this up by saying that each day her child is 'full of joy' in what he learns.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school judges the quality of teaching and learning to be good, and the inspectors agree. The pupils develop skills and knowledge at a good rate. Strong relationships and high expectations set the scene. Effective lesson planning and good knowledge of the subjects taught underpin the teaching. Teaching assistants are deployed well and provide a good level of support because they have participated successfully in professional development to aid their teaching. Pupils who have additional needs are set clear targets for learning and as a result they learn at a good pace. Classrooms are attractive and interesting places in which the pupils enjoy their learning. Teachers regularly assess how well the pupils are doing, although the use of the information to set challenging targets is not yet consistently good. The quality of marking of pupils' work is variable and not always well linked to standards achieved. On occasion the pace of lessons slows. When this is the case, the pupils consolidate their learning but do not acquire new skills quickly enough.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good, particularly in the subjects that have been tailored to the school's needs such as English, mathematics, and information and communications technology. These are organised well to match the particular needs of the pupils and help them achieve well. Some other subjects are due for review and senior teachers have a good understanding of what they need to do next. The teams they lead take a lively, keen and proud approach to curricular development. A good variety of opportunities are given for the pupils to develop interest and skills in sport and the arts.

There are many ways in which pupils are able to contribute to the life of the school by taking on responsibilities such as being house captains or presenting ideas to the school council. Aspects of school, such as the way playtime is organised, have improved as a direct result of pupils' suggestions. Pupils eagerly attend the popular and wide ranging clubs available before and after school.

The pupils are prepared well for their future, particularly through the development of their spoken English and growing maturity. Education for safety and health is good and the children thoroughly enjoy the learning experiences that school provides in this area.

The pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities are supported well because the curriculum is adapted, where necessary, to meet their particular needs. As a result their progress is good. The school has yet to provide the means by which the pupils who are gifted or talented can accelerate their learning so that they meet their potential.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care and guidance given to the pupils is good. The headteacher successfully places a high priority on ensuring the pupils' care and welfare. Much time is valuably spent in contact with families, the community and agencies that provide extra support. The school takes good care of its pupils and is vigilant in ensuring that all groups of pupils feel safe and happy in school and are ready to learn. Child protection procedures are very well established and pupils have adults in school that they feel comfortable to talk to. Any risks to the pupils' health and safety are carefully assessed and dealt with.

Assessment is satisfactory overall because it identifies the standards the pupils reach and the information is used to set targets for yearly improvement. It is strongest in mathematics because frequent reviews of achievement mean staff regularly check the rate of the pupils' progress and identify where pupils need extra help. In most subjects and classes, the use of the information to set challenging targets for individuals and groups of pupils is not fully established. This means that the pupils are not clear enough about what they need to do next to improve. The teachers are not making enough use of the increasing information they have to establish a cycle of setting targets with timely review. The exception to this is the guidance given to the pupils who have

learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The challenge for the very brightest pupils is not yet honed to their needs to enable them to reach the standards of which they are capable.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school accurately judges its leadership and management to be good overall. The leadership by the headteacher is outstanding as evidenced in the successful establishment of this new school where 'everyone is valued and which strives to do its best for the children at all times'. Teamwork is innovative and contributes significantly to the school's success. It is reflected in the way in which the staff and pupils work together and aim high. The headteacher's determination to ensure the best for each child is a driving force in the rising standards. It is aided well by the commitment to professional development for all staff and the strong relationships forged with parents and external agencies. Self-evaluation is thorough and accurate, leading to the identification of appropriate priorities for action. The school development plan highlights clearly the areas that need improvement, although the use of quantifiable data to judge success is not fully included. The school takes on board the views of parents and pupils well and is sensitive to the needs of the wider community. The effective governing body offers a range of support and also judiciously holds the senior leaders to account. The school has a growing and proven record of development and its capacity to improve is good.

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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	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	1	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	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?	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	2	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

N/A

Thank you for making us so welcome at your school during the inspection. We would like to tell you that we agree with you and your teachers that St John with St Mark is a good school.

The best things are that:

- your headteacher is very special and has good ideas about how to make your school even better
- the grown-ups all work in teams and this helps your headteacher a lot in thinking of good ideas and making sure lessons are interesting and fun
- your excellent behaviour is brilliant! You are well mannered, very friendly and you work hard in lessons; you look after each other well
- lots of you join in the extra clubs and activities which your teachers run for you
- you are rightly proud of your school.

The teachers and your headteacher have worked hard to make this a good school for you. What they need to do now is:

- explain and agree with you what you need to learn next and regularly check how well you are doing
- give extra challenge to those of you who already learn quickly to make sure that you learn even more.

You can all help by working hard, remembering what it is you are learning about and by enjoying your time at this good school.