



St Luke CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 133944
LEA Bury
Inspection number 282396
Inspection dates 11 July 2006 to 12 July 2006
Reporting inspector Mr John Coleman HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Morley Street
School category	Voluntary controlled		Bury
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Lancashire BL9 9JQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 7644988
Number on roll	408	Fax number	0161 7649531
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr David White
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Miss R Ruggles

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4 to 11	11 July 2006 - 12 July 2006	282396

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This large school, just outside the town centre, serves a diverse community including Fishpool and the parish of St Peter's. The school was formed in September 2003 following the amalgamation of a community infant school and a CE junior school. The school moved to its new buildings in November 2005 and developments are ongoing to create outdoor recreation space. About half the pupils come from homes where English is not their first language and this proportion is rapidly increasing. Some 45% of pupils are White British and 47% are of Pakistani heritage. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average and very high in some year groups. About one quarter of pupils are eligible for free school meals which is above the national average. The number of pupils who join or leave the school during the year is very high. A high number also take extended absence to visit their country of origin for family and cultural reasons.

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 and improving school where standards are satisfactory and pupils make good progress in their learning due to good teaching. This confirms the school's view of its effectiveness.

The headteacher sets an excellent direction for the school and, in good partnership with the deputy headteacher, has created a strong staff team wholly committed to school improvement. Through effective monitoring of teaching and pupils' progress, the leadership has a good, accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses, such as the need to improve the assessment systems in Key Stage 1. A good example of the success in tackling weaknesses is the recent significant improvement in the standards attained in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2.

Children generally enter school with skills well below those expected for their age. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good; some teaching is outstanding. An emphasis on the development of children's social and language skills leads to good progress, although few children reach the level expected for their age by the end of Reception. Learning is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and standards are low in English, mathematics and science. By the end of Key Stage 2, however, standards are about the same as those in the majority of schools because of much good teaching which accelerates progress. Teaching, whilst good overall, has some outstanding as well as some satisfactory practice. The leadership rightly recognise the need for teaching to take more account of what is known about the children's existing achievements in order to provide activities that demand the best of all children.

Pupils are happy and enjoy life in school. An ethos of care is engendered by the good role models provided by all staff. The pupils are becoming responsible young citizens who increasingly help out as council members, help the younger pupils and receive visitors with courtesy. Behaviour is excellent and pupils get on well with each other. They are well prepared for the next stage of education and acquire the skills they will need.

The school provides good value for money and has good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 1.
- Improve the accuracy and rigour of systems to monitor and track pupils' performance in Key Stage 1.
- Ensure that information about pupils' prior attainment is used to raise the expectations of what all pupils should learn next.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils reach broadly average standards by age 11 and their overall achievement is good because of good quality teaching.

Many children enter the Nursery with skills in English, language and communication which are well below those typical of children the same age. Social skills are also low. In the Nursery and Reception classes, children who are learning to understand and speak English make rapid progress. Like the other children, they also do well in acquiring early skills in reading and writing. In all other areas of learning progress is good. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children still have some way to go to reach the level expected for their age but the good provision has narrowed the gap.

In Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress overall. A lack of continuity in teaching due to staff absence has had a detrimental influence on the rate of progress, particularly given that there are a high number of pupils with additional learning difficulties and/or disabilities in the current Year 2 group. Recent test results confirm standards remain low in English, mathematics and science.

In Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress due to good and sometimes outstanding teaching and, at age 11, most reach the level expected for their age. The most recent national test results for Year 6 support inspection findings that standards are rising. Standards in mathematics are improving at a rapid rate as a result of the leadership strategies for assessment and teaching.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Overall personal development is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and have good attitudes to learning. They say that 'teachers make their lessons fun.' The school council successfully acts as a sounding board for pupils' views. Pupils comment that they feel safe and can confidently turn to adults in the school if they need help; 'there is no bullying in our school and if there was we'd know what to do'. Excellent behaviour contributes strongly to the overall progress the pupils make. The very good relationships between staff and pupils and amongst the pupils themselves ensure that all are happy and confident. Pupils' self esteem is nurtured very effectively. Pupils said, 'teachers give out a lot of positive words' and, in turn, this is evident in the way the pupils show care and respect for others. As they get older, pupils develop a mature sense of responsibility and are keen to serve the community. For example, older pupils willingly carry out duties to help younger ones. The school successfully encourages pupils to think carefully about healthy life styles. Staff have worked very hard to provide a wide variety of physical exercise in spite of the present accommodation constraints. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well and the school has good links with local churches and the local mosques. Amongst the many charities supported by the school is the Porch project that supports local people in need. Attendance is satisfactory, and the school has many effective strategies in place that maintain it. The pupils' satisfactory standards, good attitudes and cooperation with

others are firm foundations for success in their future economic well-being; for example, older pupils have responsibility for the library, act as register monitors and organise games on the playgrounds.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall with some outstanding features. Support from local authority advisory staff is being used well to plan and deliver effective literacy lessons. Part of the reason for this is that teachers are well trained in using a range of strategies which take account of the different learning styles of pupils. In the Foundation Stage, teaching is good due to the secure understanding which all staff have of how young children learn.

Lesson plans are clear and pupils are made aware of what they are to learn in each lesson. The variety of tasks set by the teachers maintains pupils' interest and encourages them to work at a brisk pace. Teachers' enthusiasm for learning is shared by the pupils who enjoy their lessons; one child commented that the teacher 'makes maths fun'. Teachers use a variety of methods to ensure that pupils understand the work. These include challenging questioning, the use of interactive whiteboards, 'brainstorming' and discussion between pupils to assess each other's work.

Pupils' differing learning needs are well supported by the teachers and an effective team of support staff. As a result, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, as well as those with English as an additional language, make good progress. This is especially so in the development of literacy. For example bi-lingual teaching assistants are very effective in using first language to help pupils understand questions and new points. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly but do not consistently provide advice on how pupils may improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Curriculum provision is good. The curriculum is broad, balanced and is a good reflection of the inclusive nature of the school. Good features are the many extra-curricular activities that pupils enjoy and a good programme of educational visits that not only give pupils worthwhile experiences but are used creatively in the classroom to extend their learning. An increasing number of themes is used to structure pupils' learning effectively. For example, work on the East Lancashire Railway linked several subjects and made lessons more relevant for the pupils. Monitoring of the effectiveness of the curriculum is good. Standards in mathematics at Key Stage 2 have improved because of the changes made to the way the subject is taught.

Other strengths include the provision of creative arts. The school has received the highest level, ArtsMark Gold award, for its work in this area. It is also a leading school

in the local authority in the use of the programme, Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning.

The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good. The mixed age groups enable children to learn well from each other. The work is well planned and children enjoy the varied activities that promote good independent learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils receive good care and support. The school has developed strong links with parents and outside agencies. Attendance at parents' evenings has increased significantly and parents are kept well informed about the curriculum via clear booklets that summarise each term's work.

Arrangements for child protection are clear and reviewed regularly. Pupils are taught how to lead healthy lifestyles and to keep safe. The support is good for pupils whose first language is other than English, and for pupils with learning difficulties. This is due to the early identification of their needs and the sensitive deployment of bi-lingual teachers and support staff.

In the Foundation Stage, staff keep good records of the pupils' progress. Pupils' progress in writing is monitored and this is particularly good in Key Stage 2. The school has well-developed plans to extend tracking of progress to other areas of the curriculum. Pupils are aware of their daily targets but less secure on what they should be aiming for at the end of the year. There is less structured monitoring of progress in Key Stage 1. As a result, teachers and pupils are less clear about the progress made by individuals and groups of pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher's inspiration is a key feature in the rapid rate of school improvement. Her partnership with the deputy headteacher is strong and together they have built a staff team recognising individual strengths and valuing everyone for their contribution. This creates a clear sense of ownership in the strategies being used to make the school even better. Staff speak unanimously in appreciation and support of the headteacher's consideration, sensitivity and clear direction. As a result, there is excellent staff commitment to the school's improvement plans.

The strong senior leadership team is accurately aware of strengths and weaknesses in provision through its rigorous programme of monitoring the quality of teaching. One outcome is the plan to extend the good assessment practice found in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 1. Similarly, appropriate areas are identified for improvement. For example, the coordinator for mathematics identified the need to improve pupils' skills in calculation. By utilising the good partnership with the local authority, new school guidelines for teaching calculation have been established and

new schemes of work introduced with closer attention given to matching work to pupils' needs. The success of this improvement plan is clearly seen in the rapid rise in standards in mathematics in Key Stage 2.

The school has a successful partnership with Manchester Metropolitan University which results in a significant number of trainee teachers making a positive input to the education provision. This is well managed by the coordinator.

Governors are well informed and knowledgeable about the school; they successfully challenge the school leadership where appropriate and provide effective support. They are increasingly seeking information for themselves and this is welcomed by the school leadership; for example, visits are arranged for governors to talk to subject coordinators and to observe pupils while they learn.

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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	NA	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

Following our visit we would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome and for talking to us about your lessons and life in school. We would like to tell you what we found out about your school.

- Your school is improving and lessons are getting better and more interesting so that you learn more.
- You told us that you enjoy school and are happy. We think this is because all the staff treat you as special and look after you so well.
- You all behave very well and are responsible.
- Your headteacher and deputy headteacher are very good at improving your school.
- We have asked the school to collect more information on how well pupils are working in Key Stage 1.
- We have also asked the school to make sure that pupils in Key Stage 1 reach higher standards in English, mathematics and science.
- We have asked the teachers to make better use of the information about what you can already do to plan what you do next.

Thank you for helping us so much with the inspection of your school. We all hope you will carry on enjoying learning and helping your teachers to make St Luke's CE Primary School an even better place to be.