

# St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Hawkshaw

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105340
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bury
<b>Inspection number</b>	287201
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 March 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Judith Clarke

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	102
School	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Derek Lomas
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs G Woodward
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 February 2001
<b>School address</b>	Bolton Road Hawkshaw Bury Lancashire BL8 4JL
<b>Telephone number</b>	01204 886167
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a small semi-rural school with pupils coming from a variety of social and economic backgrounds. Almost all children are from a White British heritage. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need is above average. The school has a number of awards including, the International Schools Award, ActiveMark, Inclusion Award and the Healthy School Award.

## 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 where each child is welcomed into a caring and supportive Christian community. Parents are overwhelmingly appreciative of all the school offers and commend its pastoral and academic successes.

The success of this school is rooted in the effective leadership of the headteacher who is ably assisted by her deputy headteacher. Good teamwork, high quality commitment demonstrated by all staff and governors alongside outstanding care and support for the pupils ensure that the pupils feel safe and secure. Consequently, they achieve well.

Children start school in the Reception year with skills that are broadly average. Good teaching ensures that the Reception children make good progress because they have an engaging curriculum. Each year group is small and often the make up of each year is very different. However, by the end of Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are generally above average. Results in science are usually stronger and achievement in mathematics is improving further. However, there is more to do to improve achievement in English and more especially in writing.

The pupils say they like school; it is a friendly place where new pupils are welcomed and quickly feel at home. The number of pupils who join the school part way through their schooling is high and these pupils speak very positively about the welcome they have received and how quickly they have settled. They felt this was also due in part to the way the teachers had made sure that work was well matched to their individual needs. This is a significant strength in the good teaching and learning in the school. Teachers and support staff know the pupils extremely well and make sure that lessons are well planned. Less well developed is the consistency of assessments and marking of pupils' work, especially their written work. This, often, does not give enough guidance for the pupils to see what they must do to improve their writing further.

Enjoyment of all that the school offers is reflected in the pupil's attendance, which is above average. Pupils feel that they have an active role in the life and work of the school demonstrated by the SNAG group (school nutrition action group) who run the healthy school tuck shop. The school council work hard to raise money for good causes and promote the interests of the pupils in the school. For example, they wrote to the governing body asking them to consider a point of view expressed by a number of pupils. Independence, thoughtfulness and hard work are actively promoted.

The curriculum is outstanding. The pupils have many opportunities to learn about other countries. They speak three foreign languages and indeed one of the role play areas in the Reception class reflects shopping in a European country with Euros for payment. Pupils have many opportunities in clubs and lessons to learn songs, converse, write to their pen pals and learn about the cultures and traditions of different countries. For those pupils who have musical interests, there is a strong tradition of learning to play a musical instrument and singing is a strength in the school. Sporting achievements are celebrated with the school taking an active and often successful part in small school tournaments. Many after school clubs give pupils the chance to learn different skills, line dancing, for example.

The headteacher has a clear educational vision for the school rooted in the Every Child Matters agenda. She is determined that every child will have the best possible chance and she is totally supported by all staff and governors. School self-evaluation is broadly accurate, and although the school improvement plan is a good tool, it is not rigorous enough in some areas to drive

forward school improvement. It is not always clear what initiatives will achieve and when. The governing body are supportive of the school and give good guidance. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Good systems are in place for further development and consequently, the school has good capacity to improve. The school gives good value for money.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve the consistency and quality of assessment of pupils' work including marking to enable the pupils to make better progress in their writing.
- Ensure that the school improvement plan is a more rigorous document so that the effects of initiatives are better monitored.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement in this small school is good. The children start school in the Reception year with skills that are broadly average and they make good progress in all aspects of their learning. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are generally above average. School data show that all the pupils make good progress throughout the school. Achievement in mathematics is rising and standards have been consistently good in science because of the high level of expertise in the school and specialist teaching. However, English results remain an area the school is working on. Achievement here is not quite as strong, especially in writing and it is as yet too soon to see the impact of recent initiatives. The school rightly considers there is more to do to improve the pupils' written work, especially handwriting and spelling. Those pupils who start school part way through their schooling quickly settle and they, too, make good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of the extra help and support they have in lessons.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development, well-being and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. There is a strong family atmosphere in school with the older pupils happily taking care of the younger pupils and all being fully aware of the community of the school. Independence is strong with pupils having the chance to follow particular interests, for example, in creating a school newspaper or helping younger pupils play games in the playground. Pupils are active in helping those who are less fortunate than themselves, organising different money raising activities, often well supported from home. Behaviour in class and around school is exemplary. They are well aware of the need to be healthy, safe and active. They are beginning to consider issues of global importance, for example, recycling. There are many opportunities for the pupils to take part in a wide range of after school clubs and activities. Links with schools in Italy and France enable the pupils to see how life in different European countries is different to their own. Attendance is above average and is reflected in the way the pupils say they enjoy school and that their learning is fun.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The headteacher recognises that one of the main strengths of the school is in the knowledge and understanding that all staff have of all the pupils. The teachers recognise and utilise each others subject expertise and often lessons are taught by subject specialists. Planning is detailed and information and communication technology is used well to support the teachers' explanations and to aid the pupil's learning. In some cases, the level of demand placed upon pupils by the teachers is not challenging enough. In these cases, the pupils do not remember to check that their handwriting is neat and well formed, or check that their spellings are correct, so that the pupils do not always achieve their best. The marking of pupils' work and the accuracy of assessments is becoming more consistent. In some cases, marking is exemplary when it indicates what has pleased the teacher, what the particularly positive aspects of the work are and also what must be tackled next for sustained improvement. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported in class and because of this extra help, make good progress in their tasks.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. It is exceptionally well planned so that there is not just a narrow focus on English, mathematics and science. The inclusion of a number of modern foreign languages in the curriculum is commendable. The pupils happily converse in French, German and Spanish and role-play shopping with great enthusiasm. The curriculum is broad and relevant to the interests of all the pupils. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their talents, whether it is dressing up as people from the past, for example, Florence Nightingale or leading the team creating a school newspaper. Visits to places of interest and visitors to the school all bring added richness. Pupils who are recognised as having special talents or gifts are helped to develop these interests and talents, the school is active in finding extra resources to promote their learning needs. The number and variety of extra-curricular activities for a small school is commendable.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Outstanding care and support is available for all the pupils because staff know them so well and cater for their individual needs. However, the academic guidance offered to the pupils is not as strong and consequently, the overall care, guidance and support offered is good. The school has appropriate systems in place for child protection, safeguarding pupils, and health and safety. Pupils are encouraged to be thoughtful, kind and considerate and they thrive on the school structures for praise. The school makes very good use of outside agencies to give additional training and support in school, which enables school staff to develop their own expertise. The school has good links with the local High school, which enables the pupils to transfer successfully. Pre school visits and home visits help the Reception children to make a secure start and settle happily in school. Parents play an active part in the life and work of the parish and the school, supporting school events and functions and raising considerable amounts of money for school funds. Tracking of pupils' progress is in place and assessments are becoming

more accurately moderated, but there is more to do in checking rigorously the outcomes of initiatives designed to raise achievement.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher, through her drive and energy, has ensured clarity of purpose and a clear educational direction for the school. This educational aspiration is the driving force for the school and is active in involving all staff and empowering them to lead and manage. Consequently, teamwork is very much in evidence, with all staff working together to bring about sustained school improvement.

The governing body, ably led by the chair of governors, give good aid to the school. They are active and demonstrate considerable commitment. They have worked hard to improve the accommodation and are determined to see further projects through.

The school improvement plan however lacks rigour. It does not identify clearly enough what is to be done and how key staff are going to know whether recent initiatives have been successful, so that the school can measure the impact of these strategies.

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## Annex A

## 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>
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

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

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Hawkshaw, BL8 4JL

I am writing to let you know what I thought about your school after my recent visit. You will remember I came to see how your headteacher and teachers were helping you to learn and develop as young people. I know, because you all told me, that you enjoy school and that you get on well together and particularly enjoy looking after each other. I think this is really good. I would like to thank you for being so friendly and talking to me, especially the group of pupils who were new to the school and the school council. I really enjoyed talking to you about your work, visiting your classes and speaking to your teachers. I think your school is a good school that helps you to learn well.

There were lots of things I thought were particularly good and I have listed some of them below:

Your behaviour in class and in the playground was excellent.

- o In lessons you try hard and you say that your teachers give you good help when you get stuck or have a problem, so that you make good progress.

- o I think you are very clever speaking three different foreign languages.

- o All the members of staff take very good care of you and make sure you are kept safe in school.

- Your headteacher runs your school well. She wants you all to do your best and succeed in all you do.

I know that your teachers work hard at checking your work, marking your tasks and helping you to improve, but I think sometimes it could be better. I know that at present you are all working hard to improve your writing. I agree with the school that you could do better with your writing and I think that all staff could be sharper at checking what works. I hope that you will continue to work hard in school and you will carry on helping and looking after each other. I wish you all the best for the future.