



# St Margaret's CofE Junior Infant and Nursery School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 105705  
**Local Authority** Oldham  
**Inspection number** 287308  
**Inspection dates** 8–9 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Delia Hiscock

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 address</b>	Hive Street
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Hollinwood, Oldham
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		Lancashire OL8 4QS
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 6812414
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	284	<b>Fax number</b>	0161 6816923
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Rev D Hawthorn
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr M Jones
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 October 2001		

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This slightly larger than average sized school serves an urban population with significant disadvantage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average, as is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Three quarters of the pupils are of White British heritage and a few of those from minority ethnic families speak English as an additional language.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is an improving school that provides satisfactory value for money and has a good capacity to improve. There is a sense of optimism and confidence that pervades the school. The pupils are proud of their new building and their self-esteem and motivation to do their best have grown. The strong leadership of the headteacher, supported by robust governance, has steered the school effectively through a two-year period of temporary accommodation following a disastrous fire at the start of the 2003/04 academic year. With the talents of long-serving staff, a dynamic deputy headteacher, and an influx of new teachers, the legacy of underachievement and low standards has been halted and turned around. The school's preliminary test results of 2006 and pupils' work this academic year show that the large majority of Year 6 pupils attain at a broadly average level for their age in English, and higher in mathematics. Overall, whilst pupils make good progress in these subjects, progress is not as strong in science or for more able pupils in English. This is why achievement overall is satisfactory and not stronger, and why standards overall are below average. However, provision is improving. Teaching is now consistently effective with some outstanding lessons that are helping pupils to catch up on skills they should have gained earlier in their education. Some of the older pupils, including boys, are fascinated by their lessons now and really strive hard with their classmates to evaluate what they have learned.

By the end of the Reception year, the school's information shows that standards attained are well below average compared with other children the same age. However, this is still good progress from their very low stages of development on entry; exceptionally low in communication, language and literacy. By the end of Key Stage 1, many pupils make good progress and achieve close to average standards in reading. They make excellent progress in mathematics. However, recent assessment and pupils' work show that not all higher-attaining pupils in Key Stage 1 achieve as well as they should in writing. Teamwork has ignited professional discussion, aligned planning and improved the use of assessment information to better link provision with what pupils can do and what they need to do in order to improve. These main features are enabling the school to move on.

The curriculum is designed adequately to equip pupils with the skills, knowledge and awareness they need for the future. The school has appropriate plans to enhance the curriculum further to develop pupils' skills in other subjects. Pupils' skills in information and communication technology (ICT) have improved since the previous inspection. The pupils are trustful of adults in school, they feel secure and they respond well to the good quality of care they receive and the clear expectations of their behaviour. This is because the good relationships reflect the respect for everyone. The pupils are happy to come to school and particularly like the additional activities for sport and other clubs.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in science to an average level by the end of Year 6 and improve the achievement of higher-attaining pupils in English at both key stages.

- Improve the quality of marking and feedback provided for pupils.
- Develop pupils' skills further in literacy and numeracy through different subjects.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Although standards overall are below average by the end of Year 6, pupils' achievement has built satisfactory from their low starting points. This includes pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those who learn English in addition to their mother tongue. Achievement is not stronger because good progress is not yet consistent throughout the school for all pupils. For example, they make good progress in Nursery and Reception classes to reach standards that are below average by the time they start Year 1. However, throughout school, attainment in reading is slightly better than in writing because staff have more confidence in the teaching of reading. It is much higher in mathematics than in science and challenging targets are exceeded because strong teaching and excellent catch-up work in Key Stage 2 have accelerated pupils' progress. However, higher attainers in particular could achieve more in English.

Standards attained at the end of Year 6 are improving rapidly. Test results in 2004 and 2005 reflected low achievement. This was the result, in part, of the difficulties arising from the school's relocation to temporary accommodation, and to an extent by the nature of the cohorts, causing interruptions to pupils' progress. Leadership strengths, intensive support for the school, and the influx of new staff have successfully tackled the underachievement.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. The pupils are proud of their new environment and take good care of it. One of the reasons for their enjoyment of school is the good quality of relationships that exist between everyone in school. Attendance is broadly average. The pupils are well behaved and are motivated by lessons that interest them, boost their self-esteem and help them to catch up in their skills. Many of the pupils are keen to take part in other activities which the school provides, and they respond well when given responsibility in the school council, as a playground buddy or to support younger pupils. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. There are many opportunities for reflection, for celebrating success, for supporting charities and for understanding what they might contribute to the community. The pupils are well aware of how diet and exercise contribute to being healthy. Their skills in literacy and numeracy are adequate, but new ways for them to evaluate learning with their classmates are developing vital skills for the future.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Effective developments in planning, and some outstanding practice in English, mathematics and some other subjects are building pupils' basic skills quickly, motivating them as learners and equipping them with new evaluative skills that take them straight to the heart of the learning in each lesson. Lessons are interesting, enhanced by exciting use of ICT, and are closely matched to learning needs, though not as consistently so for higher-attaining pupils, who are sometimes set work that is too easy. Pupils know what they are to learn in lessons and they are keen to contribute their own ideas, which teachers value and use well to tackle misconceptions or build on when questioning. Because of the teachers' consistent approach to ensuring good behaviour, the good relationships, and the interesting activities they provide, pupils listen well and are keen to learn. This sets them up well for the future. The quality of marking is variable so the pupils are not always clear about how to improve their work.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory. It meets national requirements and features several positive qualities. Strong support for the pupils' personal, social and health education means that pupils know how to keep safe and live healthily. The good range of visits, visitors, and after-school activities are much valued by the pupils and increase the breadth of their learning. Close links between primary schools, and the use of local resources for ICT, benefit their learning. Provision in the Foundation Stage is resourceful, provides the children with a good start to their education and is built on effectively by transition arrangements between year groups. These contribute well to pupils' well-being and are a key factor that supports planning for the mixed-age year groups. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop literacy and numeracy skills across subjects other than English and mathematics.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

The good quality of care, guidance and support is an important factor in ensuring the good level of pupils' personal development and well-being. The staff recognise and reward good attitudes and behaviour, and this helps to raise pupils' self-esteem, and encourages them to try hard and do well. The school has gained a Healthy School award and the guidance that pupils receive helps them to understand about the choices of food and exercise. The school's procedures for safeguarding pupils have been completed but not centralised yet. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well. Their needs are carefully analysed and they are provided with

effective support, including that from the teaching assistants as well as outside agencies. Guidance for pupils' academic progress is satisfactory.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The leadership of the headteacher and strong governance have steered the school smoothly through a difficult period. They have focused on raising standards and demonstrated effective skills to bring about improvement. With the able lead and exemplary teaching model provided by the new deputy headteacher, leaders at all levels demonstrate a renewed vitality, increased expectations of the pupils and the skills needed to bring this about. With good opportunity to monitor the impact of their work, staff can better match provision with pupils' needs and have brought a sparkle to aspects of school life that are often difficult to develop, such as the attitude of boys and to writing. Performance management is linked effectively to the areas for improvement identified in the succinct school improvement plan. These features have contributed to the school's accurate evaluation of its work. Effective professional development and energetic teamwork are key elements that provide the school with a good capacity to improve.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
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>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### 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>	3
<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.

## 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	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	No
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

We really enjoyed our visit to your school. Thanks so much for all the interesting chats you shared with us. It was great talking with you. We found you to be really polite and helpful pupils. This letter is to tell you what we think about your school.

We found your school to be okay. We really like the new building, just as you do! We can see that you are enjoying lots of your lessons too. We found that you behave well, you show respect for each other and for your teachers, and you try hard in your lessons. You are also becoming quite good at deciding how much you have learned in lessons. That's a really good skill that will help you to learn well in the future. We could see also that you know how to keep safe and healthy. That's really important too.

The teachers and all the other staff work hard to make lessons interesting for you. There are some things that we have asked the school to improve. Here they are:

- help you to get better at science
- help those of you who learn quickly to get even better in English
- tell you how to improve your work through marking your books thoroughly
- provide opportunities for you to use your skills at reading, writing and numeracy in some the other subjects you study.

Perhaps you too could think of ways to learn even better?

Good luck for the future.