

# St Gabriel's Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105808
<b>Local Authority</b>	Rochdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	287336
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Margaret Lewis

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 controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	182
School	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rev Ian Cook
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Janet Abbott
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 April 2002
<b>School address</b>	Tonge Roughs Aspinall Street Middleton Manchester M24 2BE
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 6539587
<b>Fax number</b>	0161 6430497

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

St Gabriel's is a smaller than average school. Pupils come from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds but a significant proportion are socially less advantaged as is reflected in the above average proportion entitled to free school meals. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average, although the school has an above average proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need. The majority of pupils are of White British background. A small number of pupils are looked after by the local authority. A high number of pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2, join the school at times other than the usual times. Over the past few years, the school has faced considerable staffing difficulties. It holds the Sport England ActiveMark.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

St Gabriel's provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils and gives satisfactory value for money. Pupils' good personal and social development is a strength. This is because of the good care, support and guidance the school gives them within a safe, secure and stimulating environment. Links with parents are good and the great majority of parents are very happy with the school and what it provides. They particularly like that their children enjoy coming to school and feel safe and secure.

In the past three years there has been underachievement in Key Stage 2 English, mathematics and science. This has been due to a variety of factors, such as instability of staffing, in particular senior staff, and difficulties with recruitment of trained teaching assistants. It has resulted in some pupils not making the progress they should. The school is now tackling previous underachievement vigorously and is intent on raising attainment. Inspection findings show that standards are now improving due to a stable staff, improved teaching and close tracking and monitoring of pupils' progress.

Achievement is satisfactory overall. It is good in the Foundation Stage, where children make good progress. Children start in the Nursery with standards that are well below average. Many have difficulties in their skills of communication and language and in their personal and social skills. They reach broadly average levels by the time they start in Year 1. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 and reach broadly average standards in Years 2 and 6, although the higher attaining pupils could achieve more.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. There are examples of good teaching with effective use of assessment that challenges all children. This is particularly the case in the Reception class and in Year 2, where assessment information is used well. However, assessment is not used consistently by teachers throughout the school to match work to pupils' learning needs and challenge them to achieve as well as they should. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support in their group work, but higher attaining pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2 are not always given sufficient challenge. Good, imaginative teaching results in the acceleration of pupils' progress in Year 6 and pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. The curriculum is satisfactory and is well supported by a wide range of clubs and visits out of school. The school has good resources for information and communication technology (ICT), although pupils do not have enough opportunities to use this across subjects of the curriculum.

The headteacher provides good leadership and has shown strength of purpose in tackling staffing and accommodation difficulties over recent years. She is supported by an effective team of senior staff and governors and there is a joint vision and determination to improve further. However, the school's clear and focused plan for raising attainment has not yet had sufficient time to become embedded and show a sustained impact on standards. The school has satisfactory capacity for further improvement, with a shared vision that has at its heart the importance of each individual pupil.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science for higher attaining pupils.
- Ensure that teachers make consistent use of assessment information to match work to pupils' ability so that teaching consistently challenges all pupils to achieve as well as they can.

- Extend pupils' use of ICT across other subjects to help them develop the full range of their skills.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Children in the Foundation Stage have a good start to their education. They make good progress and achieve well relative to their starting points. They start with standards that are well below average and reach broadly average standards by the time they begin Year 1. Pupils in Key Stage 1 generally make satisfactory progress and reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 2. This has been a trend over the past five years. Pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to make satisfactory progress and achieve satisfactorily, although progress accelerates at the end of the key stage. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve satisfactorily. However, higher attaining pupils in Years 1 to 6 could do better in English, mathematics and science. Current pupils in Year 6 are on track to meet their challenging targets in English and mathematics for the current year and to exceed their targets in science. This is an improvement on results in 2006 when standards reached were significantly below the national average. Standards in 2006 were affected by the Year 6 cohort containing a significant proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This group included a significant proportion of lower attaining pupils who joined the school during Year 6 and a significant number who had joined over Key Stage 2.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils say they feel safe because they know that adults will help them if they have a problem. Most pupils behave well, have positive attitudes to their work and play cooperatively, though the school has to work hard to address the needs of a small minority of pupils with weaker behaviour. Pupils' enjoyment of school is good. They are clear about what contributes towards a healthy lifestyle and try to eat healthily and take advantage of the fruit available at break time and at lunchtime. A good number enjoy taking part in the wide range of physical activities on offer both at lunchtime and after school. They understand what precautions they should take to keep themselves safe. The pupils are developing satisfactory skills for their future economic well-being. Attendance is satisfactory overall and the school works hard to improve both attendance and punctuality. The positive atmosphere and strong Christian values of the school underpin pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils learn about cultures and beliefs other than their own. Pupils are encouraged to take on responsibility and make a contribution to the life of the school, particularly through their involvement in the school council. This has influenced, for instance, the provision of outdoor play equipment.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning vary across the school with some consistently good teaching in the Reception class and in Year 6. Staff training and support are helping teachers to develop their

skills and this is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Teachers generally plan lessons well. Good relationships between teachers and pupils ensure that teachers manage pupils well and this encourages good behaviour. Pupils are aware of what they need to know and understand in a lesson and this is checked at the beginning and at the end. Those pupils with learning difficulties are supported effectively to help them make satisfactory progress. However, teachers do not always provide sufficiently challenging work for higher attaining pupils to move them on quickly enough. Marking of pupils' work varies. Where it is marked well, pupils are given good guidance linked to their individual targets as to what they need to do to improve but this is not always the case. Pupils are generally aware of the individual targets they have to improve their work but some pupils do not always know how to do so. They need more guidance in helping them to understand how to move forward.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. It is best in the Foundation Stage, where children have many opportunities for structured, practical and free choice activities.

Joint thematic planning is in place in the Nursery and Reception classes and is tailored to meet the needs of the children well. The school gives sufficient time for all subjects to be taught in Key Stages 1 and 2. It gives an emphasis on the key skills of literacy and numeracy, which follow recommended guidelines, and is beginning to make links between subjects to make learning more relevant and interesting. Personal and social development receives good attention in lessons and throughout the day. This leads to good relationships between pupils and between adults and pupils and impacts well on pupils' behaviour. The school has invested heavily in new resources for ICT and has useful links with the nearby technology college but there are insufficient planned opportunities for pupils to use ICT in other subjects. The enrichment of the curriculum is good. There is a wide range of after school and lunchtime clubs for both key stages including a variety of sports and gymnastics, music groups, art and computers.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

St Gabriel's is a caring school and gives high priority to the welfare of its pupils. Parents are very happy with the way the school cares for their children. Good links have been established with outside agencies to ensure the school gives pupils good guidance and support to promote their personal development. The headteacher has improved the accommodation to ensure the best environment possible for the pupils to flourish. Procedures for safeguarding pupils, including arrangements for child protection and health and safety, are securely in place. A lot of work has been done recently to check pupils' work in order to gain an accurate picture of their attainment. This has been used well to provide additional group support and to check progress and give teachers a clear overview of progress throughout the school. Pupils indicate that there are very few instances of bullying and that these are usually resolved quickly. This, along with regular pupil progress meetings is allowing more timely intervention to enable children in danger of underachieving to be identified and supported.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The overall quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. In recent years various difficulties, including staffing instability, have hampered the school's development. However, these have now been resolved. The headteacher provides good, clear leadership and is supported satisfactorily by governors. In the past year she has introduced an Intensifying Support Programme designed to improve the progress of all pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2. There is now a much clearer focus on planning which accurately prioritises the important areas for development.

The management team is now using data more rigorously. The recently improved tracking of pupils' progress is providing the school with secure, accurate data with which to monitor and assess progress. Teaching and learning are monitored regularly and this ensures there is a clear understanding of how well pupils are performing. As a result, intervention strategies, especially in English and mathematics, are being employed more rapidly. However, the changes made are relatively new and yet to be fully reflected in sustained improving standards and achievement. Subject leaders are developing their roles and taking a more active lead in improving their subject areas. Financial management is good. Self-evaluation is mostly accurate and informed by improved systems of monitoring and evaluation that involve governors as well as the headteacher and deputy headteacher.

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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>	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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
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>	3
<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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
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	3
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

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

Thank you very much for welcoming the inspection team to your school. We thoroughly enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work. Your school gives you a satisfactory standard of education. It is clear that you enjoy the activities that you take part in and some of you do really well in your lessons and in your sport activities. We were very impressed by the way in which you were polite and respectful to us. Your behaviour is good and we enjoyed our time at St Gabriel's. Your teachers look after you well and you know how to keep safe and healthy.

We have asked the school to make sure that all of you do as well as you possibly can in English, mathematics and science. By giving you work that that helps everyone to make the best possible progress, more guidance on how you can understand your targets to improve and more opportunities to use information and communication technology (ICT), we think that standards at your school will become even higher. Your headteacher knows exactly what to do next to help this happen and we hope that you will work hard and play your part to bring it about.

Thank you once again for your help and best wishes for your future learning.