



Stansfield Hall Church of England/Free Church Primary
School
Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 105810
Local Authority Rochdale
Inspection number 287337
Inspection dates 20–21 September 2006
Reporting inspector Jane Hughes

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Todmorden Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Summit, Littleborough
Age range of pupils	5–11		Lancs OL15 9PR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01706 378273
Number on roll (school)	116	Fax number	01706 375815
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Stephanie Fitzpatrick
		Headteacher	Ms Hilary Chadwick
Date of previous school inspection	10 June 2002		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
5–11	20–21 September 2006	287337

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This smaller than average school hosts and runs a pre-school provision for up to 20 children and an afternoon playgroup for children from the age of two and a half years. There are breakfast and after-school clubs with holiday provision for up to 20 children. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is much higher than average. The new headteacher joined the school in September 2005. Prior to this, the school experienced a period of extreme turbulence among its senior leaders with three acting headteachers between 2004 and 2005.

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 with a newly stable leadership team. There is good leadership and management by the new headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other senior managers. Together, they have accurately identified how to raise standards and accelerate pupils' progress. The headteacher has a clear understanding of all aspects of the school, although some of the school's self-evaluation regarding its overall effectiveness, achievement and standards, and curriculum quality are rather modest. The revitalised team of committed staff and governors ensure that the school gives good value for money. In view of the many recent improvements in standards and achievement, and the good progress the school has made since its last inspection, the school demonstrates a good capacity to improve.

Until recently, children arrived in the Foundation Stage with skills well below national expectations. In 2006, these pupils attained average standards in the Year 2 and Year 6 national tests and this represented good progress. Children's skills on entry are rising as a result of the effective pre-school provision now in place. At the same time, the good quality of teaching and learning throughout the school enables pupils to attain increasingly higher standards and to make good progress. Even so, the pace of learning dips occasionally because the tasks set do not challenge pupils enough. The good quality curriculum provides varied and thought-provoking activities for pupils. When asked what they like about school, most pupils cry, 'Maths! Maths! Maths!' Pupils absolutely love the subject and the way it is taught. Children in the Foundation Stage also benefit from good quality teaching and learning experiences. However, the facilities for their learning outdoors are inadequate and limit the independent choices children can make to play outside each day. Children cannot use the outdoor environment regularly or independently enough to support their development across all areas of their learning. It is too small and is inconveniently sited. There is no storage for resources and no covered area for when it is wet.

Parents agree that teachers know pupils well. The careful tracking of pupils' progress through the school helps teachers and support staff to identify what each child needs to do to improve and to set challenging targets for them. Equal attention is given to providing good levels of personal care, guidance and support to individual pupils. They value this, as do their parents who comment on 'a very friendly atmosphere' in school. Parents and pupils agree that the school is a calm place where adults encourage children to achieve their best while nurturing a Christian ethos. Pupils blossom into mature young individuals because their personal development is good. They learn to look after themselves and become increasingly independent learners. Some pupils are school councillors or playground buddies and they are very positive examples for their peers. This is particularly important for some of the younger children who occasionally display aggressive and disruptive behaviour. This behaviour is well managed by teachers in lessons. Instances are sometimes missed outdoors where a small, yet noticeable minority of pupils lack self-control when playing. This is partly because there are insufficient opportunities for purposeful play outside.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the outdoor facilities for Foundation Stage children so that they can more easily and regularly access all areas of their learning.
- Increase the pace of some lessons so that pupils make as much progress as possible.
- Ensure that behaviour outside is as good at play and lunchtimes as it is in classrooms by providing pupils with more opportunities to enjoy adult led, purposeful activities.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children enter the Foundation Stage with skills broadly in line with national expectations, although elements of their personal, social and emotional development are below these levels. They make good progress, particularly in communication, language, literacy and mathematics and attain skills above national expectations in these areas. In the 2006 national assessments pupils in Years 2 and 6 attained average standards. This represents good progress as they entered school with skills below and often well below national expectations. Few had experience of any pre-school provision. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities made equally good progress. Year 2 pupils are making good progress and are reaching higher standards than Year 2 pupils last year. They were the first year group to benefit from the on site pre-school provision and on entry to the Reception class had higher average attainment than previous groups. The current Year 6 started school with low previous attainment. They are not expected to reach average standards in the 2007 tests and lower school targets reflect this. However, their rate of progress is now faster because the school has acted to create smaller teaching groups to help these pupils to achieve better.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils respond well to the school's Christian ethos and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They know right from wrong and understand the benefits of living in a multicultural society. Pupils welcome rewards for behaving well and say that the 'warning system is fair and it works'. They listen attentively in lessons. This has a positive effect on the standard of their work and the progress they make in learning the basic skills vital for their future economic well-being. Most rightly feel that although behaviour in lessons is good, playground behaviour can still be too rough and that some of the new playtime equipment is not always used properly. Pupils are aware that a good diet and regular exercise are key to a healthy lifestyle. Many participate in after-school sports and enjoy daily fruit snacks. Some are school councillors, buddies or monitors and pupils delight in improving the school community and the wider one in which they live. For example, they participated eagerly in reviving the community pond.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers in the Foundation Stage have a clear understanding of how young children learn. They talk to and question them constantly and urge them to make the most of new experiences. Throughout the school enthusiastic and knowledgeable staff make learning fun and engage pupils' interest. Year 6 pupils found it fun to remember the different meanings of 'to, too, two' while singing 'Daddy's taking us to the zoo tomorrow' with flashcards and a guitar accompaniment. Teachers challenge pupils to do their best and set high expectations. Many pupils say how much they enjoy mathematics because teachers 'make it fun but it's hard too!' Pupils are often engrossed in their learning and keen to finish activities once started. When the pace in a very few lessons slows and tasks set do not demand enough of pupils, they do not learn as much as they could. Teachers consistently enhance pupils' self-esteem by establishing good relationships and through regular praise and encouragement. There are good systems to assess pupils' learning. These help teachers to plan challenging activities that generally stretch individuals and result in good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum offers all pupils in Years 1 to 6, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities a broad and rich range of experiences. Regular French lessons and a wide variety of music, drama and art activities spark pupils' curiosity and improve their learning. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is changing as the school moves away from a central computer suite to portable laptop computers, giving pupils more opportunities to use ICT in lessons to support their learning. Links with a school a few miles away help pupils to identify similarities and differences within British society. Close working relationships with the pre-school ensure children join the Foundation Stage with little anxiety as they are so familiar with the setting. After-school provision enables pupils to build on the social skills they learn during the day. The busy Foundation Stage classroom is full of colourful resources. Facilities for learning outside are inadequate. Children cannot independently access the new, flat play area as it is on the other side of the school. This restricts children's opportunities to choose independently to play outside whenever they wish. There is no outside storage space or covered area for when it is wet.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school rightly prides itself on its strong care and support for all pupils including vulnerable children and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Bright, shared areas entice pupils to make the most of all the facilities. Parents agree that the school takes good care of their children. Staff encourage parents to become increasingly

involved in their children's learning through improved home-school links and parents' workshops. Good attention to pupils' academic support through careful tracking of pupils' work and progress ensures staff know pupils well. Pupils understand their targets and what they need to do next to improve their work. Child protection procedures and others to safeguard pupils' well-being are in place along with required health and safety systems. Efficient administrative, caretaking and lunchtime staff ensure the school and its support services run smoothly in a clean and orderly environment. However, adults do not support pupils' purposeful play enough at playtimes and lunchtimes. The behaviour of some pupils deteriorates as a result.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The new headteacher has a clear vision of what pupils, parents, staff and governors should achieve together. She has made a significant impact on standards, progress and behaviour in a short time and instilled a sense of purpose and urgency. Parents speak highly of what the headteacher and her team have achieved so far and they fully support the school's work. Managers work well together and focus relentlessly on improving standards and maintaining faster rates of progress. The headteacher's first challenge on arrival was to improve pupils' behaviour. The new strategy to manage behaviour is largely successful and the school is an orderly community. Even so, senior leaders agree that there is still more to be done, particularly at playtimes. Governors are very supportive of the new headteacher and have enough experience to check and challenge what happens in school. They understand the school's priorities for improvement and when and how these will happen.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	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

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for your friendly welcome during my recent visit to your school. I enjoyed talking to you, listening to your views and seeing how well you work in lessons. I saw you enjoy some exciting and even unusual activities. I don't see children trying to eat jelly babies with chopsticks every day of the week!

You are right to be proud of your good school. I was pleased to confirm in my report that:

- your school is a happy, cheerful place with lots of interesting activities
- all the adults take good care of you and you say you feel safe in school
- you learn lots about healthy living and how to stay safe
- you try hard in lessons and get on well with your work
- your headteacher and all the teachers and governors know what to do to make the school even better.

This is what I have asked your school to do now so it will improve further. I'm sure you can think of some helpful ways to play a part in these.

- Make outdoor play areas and equipment better in the Foundation Stage.
- Make all lessons challenging and interesting.
- Help you to learn new playtime skills, behave better and have more fun in the playground.

Once you have learned some new games and skills you will be able to help each other enjoy your time outside even more. Carry on working hard and enjoying your school!