

# St Mary's Rawtenstall Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119368
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	291398
<b>Inspection date</b>	26 April 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Lynne Read

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	184
School	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Darlene McLoughlin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Julie Frazer
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 February 2003
<b>School address</b>	Haslingden Old Road Rawtenstall Rossendale Lancashire BB4 8RZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01706 216407
<b>Fax number</b>	01706 224759

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This average sized school serves an ethnically diverse community. The proportion of pupils claiming free school meals is above average. When they enter the Reception class, children's development is much lower than usual. The majority of pupils are of White British, Bangladeshi or Pakistani heritage; around half speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average overall, but the number of pupils who have a statement of special needs is higher than in most schools. The incidence of pupils joining or leaving the school is higher than usual in some year groups, especially in Key Stage 2.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

St Mary's is a good school and provides good value for money. This judgement matches the evaluation made by the management, staff and governors. Parents have very positive views of the school. One wrote, 'My children enjoy school and are doing very well academically'. Parents' and pupils' views are sought regularly; they are valued and acted upon. Actions taken as a result of consultations include new playground equipment and better information for parents about what their children are studying.

Children receive a very good start to their education in the Reception class and make good progress in Years 1 and 2. By the time pupils leave Year 6, standards have generally been significantly above average, with pupils achieving very well. The 2006 group included a higher than average percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The overall standards of this year group were just above average, lower than usual, although the school's targets were met. However, two factors adversely affected their overall achievement: some new pupils entered the school during the upper junior years; others took extended leave to visit their homelands and had very little time to make up for shortfalls in learning on their return. The school took swift action to amend the policy of granting leave and introduced a more rigorous system for checking on pupils' progress. Reliable, detailed records and inspection evidence show that the present Year 6 pupils are making good progress, with many working at a higher than expected level.

Teaching is good throughout school. In some classes, good strategies for marking, together with clear advice for pupils to help them improve their work, are having an especially good effect on progress. This good practice is not seen consistently in all classes. There is a good range of expertise, including fluency in different languages, among teachers and teaching assistants. As a result, pupils are very well supported in learning English and are given good help to overcome any associated problems with learning.

The good curriculum is enriched by an interesting range of additional activities. It ensures that personal, academic, creative and physical skills are developed in a balanced way. The Healthy School Award recognises the good work done in teaching about healthy living. Pupils have varied opportunities to experience responsibility and they carry out a range of jobs diligently. This prepares them well for their future lives and also contributes to the strong sense of community in school. Good personal development is promoted well through positive strategies of encouragement and rewards for effort or good deeds. Pupils say they enjoy school. Staff and governors, with the good cooperation of most parents, have worked hard to improve attendance which is now good. Attention to safety issues, including checking on the suitability of staff and helpers, is meticulous.

The headteacher provides very good leadership which promotes strong teamwork. Subject managers have a good overview of provision but do not have enough time to work with colleagues to develop the best elements of practice across the school. Good partnerships with other schools and outside agencies provide many benefits to pupils' learning, such as additional sports facilities. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good; the strengths reported then have been maintained. There is no complacency in this school and there is good capacity to improve even further.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the best practice of marking and systems for providing advice to pupils on how to improve their work across all classes.
- Provide regular opportunities for subject managers to develop the best practice throughout the school.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Children's development varies widely when they enter the Reception class. Overall, it is well below that typical of their age, and an increasing proportion of children are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. Children make good progress and, by the end of the year, attainment is broadly average, although skills in understanding and speaking English are still weak for some.

By the end of Year 2, the school's results are consistently above average with pupils making good progress in the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics. In 2006, the Year 6 test results were lower than usual, although they remained just above average. Achievement for this group was satisfactory. It included a higher-than-average percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their targets for attainment were met fully. Records for the current Year 6 pupils, together with their work, show that their achievement and progress are good. Over a half of them are working at the higher Level 5 in English, mathematics and science and, as a group, they are on track to meet the challenging targets set for them.

Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. Following a concerted effort by staff to improve girls' progress, they are now catching up to the boys. Good measures are in place to support the growing numbers of pupils who are learning English as an additional language so that they achieve well.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils' enjoyment of school is clearly reflected in their positive attitudes and very good behaviour. Rules are known and understood and pupils say there is no bullying or racism. They feel safe and secure and have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. Attendance has improved following enforcement of the school's policy on leave taken during term time; it is currently good. Effective spiritual, moral, social and cultural development stems from the school's caring ethos and strong links with the church and community. The quality of relationships is very good and this helps pupils to develop confidence and self-esteem. Pupils collaborate very well in lessons and on the playground. In this ethnically diverse school, all faiths and cultures are recognised and celebrated, creating a harmonious community. The school council's views are valued and they make a contribution to decision making. For example, members recently planned and presented an anti-bullying campaign to reinforce the existing culture in school. Pupils develop secure skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT); this and their experience of taking responsibility for jobs around school, provide good preparation for their future economic well-being.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. The skilled teaching in the Foundation Stage ensures that children have an exciting range of experiences to fire their curiosity and imagination. Throughout the school, teachers and well informed teaching assistants, have a good range of expertise to support pupils. A strong emphasis on speaking and listening activities, such as drama or discussions, underpins progress in English very effectively. The bi-lingual assistants provide valuable support for pupils who are learning English as an additional language so they are enabled to take full advantage of their lessons. Teachers use a range of strategies and include a good amount of practical work so that lessons appeal to pupils of different dispositions. They have been very successful in boosting the achievement of girls by improving their confidence in the classroom.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The good curriculum links subjects together well and includes a modern foreign language. Good planning ensures that reading and writing skills are constantly consolidated. Following the enhancement of computer resources, ICT is used extensively in lessons. Pupils who learn more quickly or have gifts and talents have additional challenges. Creative and physical activities feature strongly in the curriculum and are much enjoyed by pupils. Opportunities for enrichment are good. The range of exciting visits and visitors extend life experiences and make learning fun. The interesting extra-curricular activities, including sport and music, are enjoyed by a good number of pupils.

The curriculum and learning environment in the Reception class are stimulating and invite children to explore. A strong emphasis on learning sounds and letters supports progress in early reading and writing skills very effectively. The outside classroom is used constantly but there is little in the way of fixed, large scale climbing equipment to help develop children's physical skills.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good overall with some outstanding features. The school takes excellent care of its pupils; their welfare is at the heart of its work. Child protection and health and safety procedures are well established and effective. An extensive range of rewards are highly valued by pupils and motivate them very effectively. Those presented with the weekly 'class shields' display their awards with great pride. Pupils' individual needs are fully recognised and met. Adaptations to the curriculum and additional resources ensure that pupils who have physical or sensory difficulties are enabled to take full advantage of all that the school offers. As one pupil said, 'My teachers make sure that I don't miss out on anything'. Good induction arrangements ensure that Reception children and pupils new to the school are welcomed and settle quickly. Good transition arrangements are in place and pupils say they are confident about the move to secondary school.

The school tracks individual pupil's progress constantly and teachers use this information well to plan the next steps in learning. The quality of advice provided by teachers in their marking,

or in the form of 'learning goals', is good in some classes. Pupils in Key Stage 1 know exactly what is needed to improve their work and in one class in Key Stage 2 pupils took very good note of the detailed comments in their teacher's marking. However, these good practices are not seen consistently in all classes.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The excellent caring ethos is shared by all the adults who work enthusiastically as a very strong and dedicated team. The headteacher provides very good leadership which is based firmly on the drive for high standards; she is highly regarded and respected. The school knows its strengths and identifies where there is a need for improvement through an annual cycle of checking and evaluating provision. It has a good capacity for improvement. All groups of staff, parents, pupils and governors are included in this process. The success of the approach is seen in the way that the school has responded and adapted to the needs of the changing school population over recent years. Subject managers have a good overview of provision in their subjects but do not have enough time to work with colleagues to spread the best practice across the school.

The learning environment is stimulating; administration is very effective and reflects a shared sense of pride among all adults at the school and their commitment to providing the best for the pupils. Governors understand the strengths of the school thoroughly and take a good, active and critical role in the process of monitoring the school's performance. Governance is good and all statutory requirements are met.

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## Annex A

## 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>	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

<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>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
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	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	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>	2
<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

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

5 May 2007

Inspection of St Mary's Rawtenstall Church of England Primary School, Rossendale, BB4 8RZ

Dear Pupils

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave me when I recently visited your school. You made my visit enjoyable and gave me some very useful help. In return, I would like to share my findings with you.

St Mary's is a good school. It is a very happy and friendly place. Your attitudes and behaviour are very good and you take good care of each other. You enjoy interesting lessons, work hard and are making good progress. Well done, you are a credit to your school and families.

The headteacher and staff work very hard to make sure you are safe. It is good to see the very good relationships between you and the adults who teach you and I saw that you have a lot of fun in your lessons. Please thank your parents for sending lots of replies to the questionnaire. They are very pleased with all that the school provides and the progress you make.

I was impressed with the way pupils in some classes follow their teachers' suggestions on how to improve their work. It would be good to see the same systems in all classes so that you can all be more involved in your own learning. This should help to ensure that you keep up the good standards you are currently achieving.

Thank you once again for the interesting conversations I had and for letting me know your views so clearly. There is a great deal about your school of which you and the staff should be proud. Please accept my best wishes for the future.

Best Wishes

Mrs Lynne Read

Lead inspector