

# Spotland Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105776
<b>Local Authority</b>	Rochdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	308945
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Marie Cordey

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	402
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Cllr Greg Couzens
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Suzanne Cassidy
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 June 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Edmund Street Rochdale Lancashire OL12 6QG
<b>Telephone number</b>	1706 648198
<b>Fax number</b>	1706 713328

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<b>Age group</b>	5–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This large school draws pupils from a wide variety of backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is higher than average. The majority of pupils are of minority ethnic heritage. The number of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average and the proportion of pupils who are at an early stage of learning English is high. There have been significant changes in staffing across the school over the past two years. The headteacher took up post in September 2006 and the extended senior leadership team has been in operation since September 2008. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision includes two Reception classes and two part-time Nursery classes. The school has gained the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Healthy Schools Award and Investors in People status.

## 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 a satisfactory and improving school. Although standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 are below average they are gradually moving upwards following a long period of decline. Thanks to the clear vision and rigour of the headteacher this decline has been halted. Parents agree; they say, for instance, that, 'The school motivates my children to perform better,' and, 'The headteacher likes to involve families in school and is making it better.' After making a good start in the EYFS, pupils go on to make satisfactory progress during Years 1 to 6 and their achievement is satisfactory. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make similarly satisfactory progress because of the appropriate support they receive in class. A sharp and rigorous plan to improve pupils' standards in writing and especially for higher attaining pupils is beginning to take effect, but more remains to be done to raise standards even further. Pupils' progress is regularly monitored in order to ensure that they are on course to meet their new, more challenging, targets.

Pupils enjoy school, especially when they take part in the many trips, residential visits and extra activities the school provides. This enrichment is a good feature of the satisfactory curriculum which is now beginning to be a better match to the individual pupils' needs. Pupils behave appropriately and show respect for their teachers and each other. Positive relationships and the approachability of staff make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' social development and to their sense of security. Pupils say that they appreciate taking on positions of responsibility and they are more increasingly involved in helping the school to improve. Pupils are welcoming and keen to show off their school.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. For the most part, lesson planning provides enough challenge for the pupils and their different levels of ability. Nevertheless, work is too easy in some lessons, particularly for higher attaining pupils. Staff work skilfully to support, guide and care for all pupils from the very wide range of cultures and backgrounds. The majority of pupils are at an early stage of learning English but they quickly become skilled communicators. This is because of carefully planned support and effective partnerships between class teachers and support staff. Occasionally, however, opportunities are lost to use the support staff's skills. This occurs when they are not utilised to best effect for short periods in some lessons and they have little to do. They are not always actively involved in encouraging pupils to do their best. The headteacher and the new leadership team are united in their vision to raise standards. Whole-school tracking of pupils' progress is beginning to make a positive difference. Many pupils are aware of how they are doing in their work but too many are not sure precisely what to do in order to improve it. Monitoring and checking of teachers' work in class by middle leaders and class teachers is beginning to improve standards but as yet it is not consistently effective.

The work of the supportive governing body is appreciated by the school. Although there have been many changes, the new chair of governors represents a group of committed and increasingly challenging governors. The headteacher provides strong, motivational leadership. She has correctly identified where the school needs to improve and put procedures in place that are taking the school forward. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further. This is demonstrated by an accurate understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and the halt in the decline and gradual improvements already made in standards since the previous inspection.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

The quality of the EYFS is good because of good leadership and good teaching. Children achieve well from their exceptionally low starting points. All staff have taken part in training to develop the provision in the EYFS and this has resulted in improved and extended opportunities for children to learn. Consequently, children take full advantage of the many exciting play activities both indoors and outside, learning happily and cooperatively. Parents are welcomed into the EYFS and help to ensure that their children settle in well. By the time they leave Reception children are working below expected levels in most areas of their learning, which represents good progress from their exceptionally low starting points. Thorough planning ensures that activities are well matched to their needs. Children thoroughly enjoy their work and play because of the teachers' and support staff's skills in providing a wide variety of activities. Assessment of children's progress has improved but this is at an early stage of development. The school accurately identifies the need to develop assessment procedures further so that it reflects the gains children make when they are given the responsibility to choose their own activities. Teaching assistants provide sensitive, focused support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are at an early stage of learning English. By the time children leave Reception most have improved their skills and are more confident, particularly in communication.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards for all pupils and especially higher attaining pupils, particularly in writing.
- Improve the quality of teaching and the use of support staff so that work is matched more closely to the needs of all pupils and especially higher attaining pupils.
- Ensure that all pupils receive the advice they need in order to improve their work.
- Involve middle managers and classroom teachers consistently in checking pupils' performance in order to raise standards.

A small proportion of 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

The previous decline in standards and achievement has now been halted. Standards are improving but at the end of Years 2 and 6 in English, mathematics and science they remain below average. The school has accurately identified the need to raise standards further. Current pupils are making satisfactory progress from their individual starting points. Their progress in reading is the strongest aspect. Writing is an area identified for whole school improvement especially for higher attaining pupils.

A large number of pupils join school at times other than the Nursery or Reception class. These pupils are quickly assessed in order to identify their needs and carefully supported so that they make satisfactory progress. Similar support for pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are at an early stage of learning English ensures that they also make expected progress.

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

### **Grade: 3**

The school has been successful in raising pupils' self-esteem and their self-reliance. They are encouraged to have good manners and to eat healthily and they have a satisfactory awareness of how to be healthy. They enjoy physical education lessons and take advantage of the many sporting opportunities provided by school. Pupils have a keen sense of right and wrong and strive to take care of each other. They are articulate and pleasant young people. The cultures of many of the pupils' minority ethnic groups are keenly celebrated, although pupils indicate they would like to study more cultures and faiths. Attendance has improved so that it is broadly in line with average, but despite the school's best efforts pupils from a small number of families do not attend regularly. Weaknesses in numeracy and literacy leave pupils short of some of the basic skills they need for later life and their future economic well-being. However, these are balanced by their improved ability to use information and communication technology (ICT) and well developed social skills. Pupils know who to turn to if they are troubled and are keenly aware of how to keep safe.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The school's new systems for tracking and target setting are helping to raise both pupils' and teachers' expectations. Lessons are now beginning to be planned more carefully to match the needs of the pupils. Pupils learn best when they take part in practical activities and when they are involved in their learning. Occasionally, however, work is not sufficiently challenging or pupils are not actively involved in the lesson, and as a result the pace of learning slows. By way of contrast, pupils who are given work that makes them think and reflect develop their learning well. Support staff are an asset in most lessons because they are clearly focused on the needs of vulnerable pupils and share in the planning and marking of pupils' work. However in some lessons support staff are underused and do not contribute sufficiently so that learning opportunities are missed. The use of the interactive whiteboards in lessons sustains the pupils' interest in a positive way. The best marking of pupils' work is very good. It reinforces strengths and points out to pupils exactly how to improve but this high quality is not consistently evident throughout the school and feedback and marking often does not give the pupils sufficient guidance on how to improve their work.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory. Staff are beginning to develop a much closer match of work to meet pupils' individual needs. A clear focus on raising standards in mathematics and English through linking subjects together is beginning to be effective. It is helping to improve the curriculum for all groups of pupils and especially the higher attaining pupils. The quality of the curriculum is enhanced by a good range of additional activities. Pupils appreciate the many visitors who come into school and relish activities such as art, dance and music. Improvements in ICT since the previous inspection mean that pupils are now more skilled in using computer technology.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 3

Pupils at an early stage of learning English receive sensitive support from all staff including bilingual assistants. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified quickly and given appropriate support. Pupils are supported, helped and cared for in school. Pupils now have targets to work towards and are aware of how they are getting on in their work. This is still at an early stage and some pupils are not yet sufficiently guided towards improvement. Although pupils generally feel safe in school, some pupils and their parents are concerned about traffic outside school. Governors are aware of this and the school is discussing possible actions. In the meantime the school is ensuring that pupils are safe. Current government safeguarding requirements are met. Health and safety and child protection procedures are in place and risk assessment is careful and rigorous.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Leaders and managers have made a secure analysis of how to improve the school's performance. Throughout the school there have been long periods of staffing uncertainty but new procedures, stable staffing and strong leadership are beginning to make a difference. As a result achievement is now satisfactory. The school has accurately identified the need to raise standards, especially in pupils' writing and for higher attaining pupils and this is a focus for the whole school. Standards are gradually improving. Additional appointments have been made to allow pupils to work in smaller groups in key subjects and to provide extra support to boost pupils' standards. New assessment systems are also raising teachers' expectations and ensure that pupil progress is tracked more closely. This has improved the quality of teaching and raised pupils' performance. However, middle managers and class teachers are not yet sufficiently involved in monitoring pupils' progress towards their targets. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily by ensuring that pupils from all ethnic backgrounds are fully involved in school life. The school is making effective use of its funding in an effort to raise standards and provides satisfactory value for money.





## Annex A

## 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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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/or disabilities make progress	3

<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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 learners' needs?</b>	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

## 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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

Inspection of Spotland Primary School, Rochdale, OL12 6QG

I am writing on behalf of the inspection team to thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we came to inspect your school. You were very friendly and clearly wanted to tell us all about the things you do in school. We consider your school is satisfactory overall. The best things about it are how much it is improving and that your work is getting better. Your headteacher is determined to make the school improve even more and school staff are helping her to do that. You are a big part of this and I am convinced that you will be very involved and play an active part in school improvement. The standards you reach are now beginning to improve and I want them to continue to get better. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make a good start to their school life. They play and learn happily together.

I would like you to try hard to improve your work in all your subjects and especially in writing. This is very important for those of you who find your work easy. I have asked your teachers and the support staff to make sure that you each learn in ways that suit you best and have work that is just hard enough. I want you to know exactly how you can improve your work. I have also asked the school to involve your teachers more in checking how well you are doing so that they can help you do even better. I am sure you will because you are keen to do well in your subjects.

With very best wishes for your future.