

# St Margaret's Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105815
<b>Local Authority</b>	Rochdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	308958
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 January 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Judith Tolley

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 aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	211
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Stephen Maugham
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Nigel Castledine
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 June 2004
<b>School address</b>	Heys Lane Heywood Lancashire OL10 3RD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01706 369639
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Pupils attending St Margaret's Church of England Primary School are predominantly of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is high. The proportion that has learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. The school has the Leading Aspect Award, Activemark and Healthy Schools status. The headteacher has been in post since September 2006.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

St. Margaret's provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. Pupil's personal development is good. They respond positively to the school's religious character and have a good understanding of other cultures and faiths. They take pride in their school and have good relationships with their teachers and other adults. Pupils value the opportunities they have, such as the school council and playground buddies, which enable them to take responsibility and make decisions. Behaviour is good. Much of this is because the quality of care and guidance they receive is good. The progress of individuals, including pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is closely tracked and challenging learning targets set. These targets are clearly understood by the pupils and they understand what they need to do to improve. Pupils make sensible choices about healthy living. The school follows government guidelines to ensure pupils' safety and the safe recruitment of staff. Despite the best efforts of the school, attendance remains below average but is improving.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in relation to their starting points. Children join the school with skills that are below expectations for their age. By the end of Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are below average. In the Year 2 teacher assessments in 2007, standards were below average in mathematics, writing and reading. Actions taken by the school to raise standards are proving successful. Pupils are becoming more confident, particularly in speaking, reading and writing and this is having a significant impact upon their achievement across the curriculum. However, the full impact of these initiatives is yet to be seen in national test results at the end of Year 6.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory but varies through the school. As a result, pupils' progress is uneven. Assessment information is used effectively to meet pupils' individual needs in lessons and teaching assistants provide very good support for individuals so that all pupils make satisfactory progress.

The curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils' experience is enhanced by a good range of extra-curricular activities, outside visits and outside speakers. However, opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and explore ideas for themselves through a variety of subjects are too limited.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and, in the relatively short time he has been at the school, he has won the confidence of parents and pupils and the commitment of staff. Governors, too, provide strong support. Teachers and other adults work effectively as a team. All staff are involved in the school's self-evaluation process and in improvement planning which is based closely upon rigorous monitoring. Swift action to improve standards over the past year has been successful, for example, in speaking, reading and writing. The school is fully aware of what needs to be done to improve standards further, for instance, in mathematics and science. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. As a result, the school has a good capacity to improve further. The school works very effectively both through the work of the mentor and with outside agencies to remove barriers to learning and to improve pupils' attitudes towards their learning.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. When they enter school, most children have skills which are overall below what is typical for their age, with variations year on year.

Communication and social skills are well below what is expected for their age. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Relationships are good, as a result, children behave well, work cooperatively and enjoy being at school. High priority is given to developing children's attitudes to learning and communication and social skills. As a result of this, although their skills when they leave Reception are below those expected nationally, they make good progress in their personal and communication skills and so have a secure foundation to build on in Year 1. Children are well catered for and are helped to learn and play alongside others. They soon make good friends, treat each other with respect and become confident, happy learners. The school has effective partnerships with parents and 'special friends' are used well to welcome children to school. Satisfactory procedures to track children's progress are in place. Indoor provision is stimulating and provides a good range of opportunities for independent learning and activities children can choose themselves. Staff recognise, however, that activities are not planned as well in the outdoor area and this restricts children's opportunities to extend their skills outside in all areas of learning. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good, there has been good improvement since the last inspection and planning is closely linked to priorities identified through monitoring procedures.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve teaching and learning so that it is at least good in all classes.
- Increase opportunities for pupils to develop their skills through a variety of subjects and to explore ideas for themselves.
- Provide more outdoor activities to extend the development of children's skills in all areas of learning.

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**

Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils' standards are below national expectations when they enter Year 1. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are below average. This represents satisfactory achievement from their starting points. The school has focused upon improving standards in speaking and writing, and this has had a positive impact upon standards throughout the curriculum and upon pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Standards in writing, reading, speaking and mathematics have improved over the last year and this is now being reflected in assessments in Key Stage 1. Although this improvement is clear in pupils' work in Key Stage 2, it is yet to be realised in test results at the end of Year 6. In the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2007 there was evidence of underachievement in English, mathematics and science. This was as a result of unsatisfactory progress over time. Inspection evidence shows that due to the positive steps taken by the leadership this is no longer the case. Pupils are very well motivated and their progress is satisfactory.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development, including their moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils' behaviour around school and in lessons is good, they have positive attitudes towards their learning and good relationships with each other and with their teachers. The school

successfully builds pupils' confidence and self-esteem. When pupils are given opportunities to work collaboratively in lessons, they respond well. In lessons, pupils listen attentively and concentrate on tasks set. When they are given the opportunity to discuss new ideas informally with a partner beforehand, their confidence increases and they participate enthusiastically in class discussion. However, on the few occasions when activities are led by the teacher for too long and pupils are not directly involved, some pupils find concentration difficult and become restless. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and know about the benefits of healthy eating and regular physical exercise. Their contribution to the school and the wider community is good with buddying and 'special friends' systems in place and pupils leading 'Freddy Fit' activities. They are involved in Church activities and a range of sporting events.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning varies considerably from one class to another; some teaching is outstanding. In the best lessons, presentations are very clear so that pupils rapidly understand new ideas. Activities are interesting and fun and immediately engage pupils. Tasks are well sequenced so that pupils build effectively on what has gone before. Pupils make most progress when they are given the opportunity to investigate ideas for themselves or to discuss their ideas with a partner. In some lessons opportunities are missed to do this and, in others, steps in learning are sometimes missing so that some pupils struggle to complete tasks set. In all lessons teaching assistants give very good support to lower-attaining pupils and those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This enables these pupils to participate confidently in whole-class activities and to complete tasks successfully.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

Since the last inspection, the balance of time allocated to subjects has been improved to enable in depth coverage of the National Curriculum. Most teachers plan work that is interesting and enjoyable, however, pupils do not always get the chance to practise and apply their skills, for example, of investigation, reading and writing, through exploring other areas of the curriculum. A recent focus on writing with a common approach using new writing methods is helping to accelerate pupils' progress. Similarly, the emphasis on increasing opportunities for pupils to practice speaking skills in lessons is having a positive impact upon both standards and pupils' confidence. Since the previous inspection, provision in information and communication technology (ICT) has improved and an opportunity to use these skills within other lessons is satisfactory. A good programme of personal, social, health and citizenship education prepares pupils well for future challenges in life. Pupils in Key Stage 2 also have the opportunity to learn French. Each day begins with enjoyable and stimulating 'Freddy Fit' activities and, consequently, pupils start the day with a positive attitude to their learning. Pupils also appreciate the good range of clubs and extra-curricular activities as well as additional opportunities, for example, to work with artists and designers.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 2

This is a caring school and the staff know the pupils well. They provide a very supportive and encouraging atmosphere in which pupils feel safe. Pupils feel confident that any incidents of bullying are dealt with swiftly and effectively. The school works well with outside agencies to overcome barriers to pupils' learning. Pupils feel secure in the knowledge that staff are there to listen to them and help if problems arise. Skilled and effective teaching assistants support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities well and boost their self-esteem so that they can learn successfully alongside their classmates. Parents are very confident that their children are well looked after. Academic progress is tracked rigorously throughout their time in school and pupils have individual learning targets to work towards which are shared with parents. Marking of work is satisfactory. In the best examples, it is constructive and helps pupils identify what they need to do to improve further. Induction to the school is good and the school's links with the high schools ensure a smooth transition to the next stage of learning.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The school's own evaluation of its progress is accurate and the headteacher and senior leadership team have a very clear vision of the way forward. The school's action taken to improve standards has been successful and there is evidence that standards have improved across the school. This is already evident in test results at the end of Year 2 and in pupils' work. However, its full impact is yet to be seen in test results at the end of Year 6. All staff work effectively together and play a full part in the school's self-evaluation and planning processes. Roles and responsibilities are clear. Rigorous monitoring systems are now in place, pupils' progress is tracked closely and appropriately challenging targets set. Effective training and support have been provided where necessary in order to improve provision. Governors are now very well informed, play a full part in the life of the school and act effectively as critical friends.

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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	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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	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 disabilities make progress	3

### 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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?	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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	3
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

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

Inspection of St Margaret's Church of England Primary School, Heywood, OL10 3RD

On behalf of the inspectors, I would like to thank you all for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We thoroughly enjoyed talking to you and hearing your views. We noticed how well you behave and how well you get on with the adults in your school. You play an important role in improving your school.

We were impressed by how much you had managed to achieve in the last year through the school council. Well done!

I'm sure you will be interested to know that your school provides a satisfactory quality of education. You are well looked after and teachers give you good guidance about how to improve your work. The teachers have been working hard to help you improve your speaking, reading and writing recently and this has been successful. Teaching is satisfactory and helps you to make satisfactory progress. However, we noticed that some lessons were more fun and more interesting than others. We have asked the school to make sure all lessons are as interesting as the best.

We were particularly impressed by how well you worked together in pairs and small groups to explore ideas for yourselves in some lessons. We have asked the school to give you more opportunities to practise your skills and explore ideas for yourselves in a range of different subjects.

Younger children in the Reception class learn a lot through play but they don't have enough opportunity to do this outside the classroom and so we have asked the school to improve the facilities for them in their play area.

We hope you continue to work hard and enjoy your learning. We wish you every success in the future.