

Rawtenstall St Anne's Church of England Primary School, Edgeside

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119454
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	313300
Inspection date	28 September 2007
Reporting inspector	John Heap

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	160
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Greenwood
Headteacher	Mr Stephen Crook
Date of previous school inspection	1 January 2004
School address	Ashworth Road Waterfoot Rossendale Lancashire BB4 9JE
Telephone number	01706 214081
Fax number	01706 224303

Age group	3-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This much smaller than average primary school serves a mainly White British population in an area of significant social and economic disadvantage. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average. An average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the number of pupils with statements of special educational need is above average. Children's skills on entry to the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) are much lower than typical for this age. The school has successfully achieved the following awards: Healthy school (2006); Investors in People (2007); Activemark (2006). Geography Quality Mark. (2007).

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: Are standards and progress in writing good enough? What is the performance of different groups, such as the gifted and talented; minority ethnic pupils; boys and girls; pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities? How well are pupils prepared for life in a multicultural society? The inspector gathered evidence from school documentation; interviews with pupils, staff and governors; observing lessons and other activities and analysing parents' questionnaires and comments. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

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 that provides good value for money. The judgement reflects the school's good improvement since the previous inspection, its strong capacity to improve further and the challenging targets it sets across a range of activities. Parents are highly supportive of the school's effective work and a typical view is, 'The school is moving from strength to strength and that is down to the strong network of teachers and parents, links with the church and overall communication within the school, which also extends into the community.' At the core of this is the partnership between the headteacher and the vicar, who have a joint and challenging vision for the school and the community it serves.

Pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils say they enjoy school because their lessons are interesting and they feel safe and secure. Attendance and punctuality are good. Pupils' safety is a challenge for the school, particularly in the cramped playground that is on two levels. It is to the credit of all concerned that there is order and good behaviour in all areas of the school. Pupils contribute well to the day-to-day work of the school through the school council and in their role as classroom monitors. Pupils know and understand that it is important to develop a healthy lifestyle and the school's work in this area has led to an award. Pupils are well prepared for their future.

All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the very few from minority ethnic backgrounds, make good progress. Effective teaching means that limited early skills on entry to nursery are improved upon really well and by Year 6 pupils are reaching the level expected for their age. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2. In Key Stage 1 standards are good in reading and mathematics. Writing skills are more variable and the standards reached by higher attaining pupils are not as high as they could be. Boys do better than girls. Results in the Year 6 national tests showed an upward trend from 2002 to the significantly above average scores in 2005. In 2006, results were broadly average. Data from the 2007 national tests, indicate a high proportion of pupils are exceeding the level expected for their age in mathematics and science. Over time these subjects have been stronger than English where standards in writing remain much lower. Government statistics for pupils' progress from Year 2 to Year 6 show that the school is consistently in the top one-third of all schools and in the top 20 per cent in 2006. Higher attaining and gifted and talented pupils have well developed skills, such as a wide vocabulary, strategies for calculating and in information and communication technology (ICT). Year 6 girls tend to do better than boys, but test scores for both were close to the national average. The school is addressing this through planning lessons and acquiring resources that will interest the boys.

Effective teaching and learning promote good progress and enjoyment. Throughout the school there is a particular emphasis on developing pupils' basic academic skills and abilities, such as the strong emphasis in Years 3 and 4 on developing effective mathematical strategies for working out problems. These, and other skills, have been most successfully promoted and built on in Years 5 and 6 in speaking, listening, reading and mathematics. Writing is less well developed. Assessment, including the process of setting targets and marking pupils' work are not used skilfully enough to ensure all pupils make good progress in their writing. Throughout the school, lessons are well managed and this leads to very few disruptions to learning. Pupils have a clear understanding about the purpose of their lessons. Pupils with extra learning needs are well supported by teaching assistants through all parts of a lesson. For example, in a mixed

Year 1 and Year 2 class, lower attaining pupils were provided with similar work, but the support was highly structured and aimed at helping the pupils learn in small steps.

The good curriculum promotes personal and academic development well. The school is conscious that pupils require guidance in safety matters, so they often bring in visitors who can provide guidance, such as the police, fire brigade and school nurse. Pupils enjoy and remember the input by these professionals. Equally, interests in music, art, history and wildlife are awakened and nourished by visits to museums and safari parks and through visits from theatre groups and musicians. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity in Britain is enhanced by the work done in the before and after school clubs, such as the study of Eid and Chinese New Year. The school also benefits from an input provided by the very small group of minority ethnic parents in the school, for example, by providing an insight into clothing and food from another culture. Independent learning and study skills are improving, most particularly in reading, numeracy and ICT.

Care, guidance and support are good. Staff know the pupils and their families very well. As one parent stated, 'We have found this school to be very caring and very understanding....' They are particularly pleased with the information they receive and the way that the school does all that it can to support them and their children. Good relationships between pupils and with adults foster both personal and academic development. Procedures to help pupils entering or leaving the school are effective and brought about by good partnerships with a range of bodies. Child protection and other safeguarding procedures are robust and monitored well. Pupils say that they know who to turn to if they have a problem. Pupils are confident that any rare incidents of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with swiftly and effectively. Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported by skilled teaching assistants and their clear individual education plans. Assessment procedures are mainly effective and there is a satisfactory system for tracking pupils' academic and personal achievements. Although the information about pupils is clearly set out, the use of the information to help match tasks to individual needs is weaker. Consequently, the information does not always help pupils achieve as well as they can, particularly in writing.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher is a strong leader who balances carefully the need to challenge and support pupils and their families. This approach is much appreciated by pupils, parents and governors. School improvement planning identifies the correct priorities because the headteacher seeks and takes notice of a wide range of views from the school's partners, but the measures of success are not sharp enough. For example, where there is an academic priority, the indicators of success lack sharpness and are, therefore, more difficult to monitor. Nevertheless, effective self-evaluation is realistic and accurate. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body provides strong support, particularly in premises and financial matters, but their means of evaluating the school relies too heavily on the information provided by management rather than developing measures of their own.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get a good start in the newly established unit and benefit from the new premises and resources. As one parent of a nursery child put it 'it is a wonderful environment for a child to be in'. Good assessment shows that children progress well from the very weak skills and abilities they have on entering Nursery, particularly in communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional development. By the end of Reception, children reach levels that are a little below the level expected for their age and skills remain weak in literacy. Good

progress is promoted by good teaching and an effective curriculum that is interesting, challenging and tailored to individual needs. Generous staffing supports children's learning well, both inside and outside the unit. The effective leadership and management promote good care and parents are pleased about that.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use assessment information, detailed learning targets and marking to lift expectations and raise standards in writing.
- Sharpen monitoring arrangements, so that the school improvement plan has clear and measurable indicators of success.

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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?	2
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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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 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	2
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	2

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.

Annex A

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 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	2
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

29 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Rawtenstall St Anne's Church of England Primary School, Edgeside, Lancashire,
BB4 9JE

I thoroughly enjoyed being in your school this week, mainly because of your warm welcome, courtesy and the help you provided. I have put together some of the main findings about your good school.

What I particularly liked about your school:

- the increase in the proportion of Year 6 pupils reaching above average levels in mathematics and science national test results in 2007
- the good progress in the Foundation Stage and Years 3 to 6
- the good behaviour, attitudes to school and relationships you develop
- the good teaching and learning that promotes your good academic and personal development
- the way you all work so hard to help and care for each other and make a good contribution to the life of your school and the wider community
- the good range of activities that promote learning
- the good leadership and management that is much appreciated by your parents.

To make your school even better, I have asked the school to make even more use of assessment information, learning targets and marking to improve standards and progress in writing. I am sure that you will want to follow your teachers' advice and guidance very closely. Finally, I have suggested that all adults in school take a closer look at your work and their record of how well you are doing so that they can make each year group's targets in the school improvement plan more accurate and challenging.

Good luck for the future and very best wishes.

Yours sincerely

John Heap

Lead inspector