

# Church Road Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105152
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bolton
<b>Inspection number</b>	323151
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 December 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ruth James HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	264
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	22
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Janet Whitehouse
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Catherine Fenton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 June 2007
<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>	Captains Clough Road Bolton Lancashire BL1 5RU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01204 332777
<b>Fax number</b>	01204 497457

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is situated on the outskirts of Bolton. It is smaller than average. Most pupils are White British. The number from minority ethnic groups is increasing but below national average. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is slightly above average. The school's Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision includes Nursery and Reception classes. The school has achieved the Healthy School Award.

'School Shuttle', a separate independently managed before and after school club operates on the site.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

The school now has a permanent headteacher and deputy headteacher, who together are driving forward the necessary improvements. The school is now providing a satisfactory education. Since the last inspection, attendance has increased, and teaching and learning are better resulting in pupils making more rapid progress and a rise in standards at Key Stage 2.

In the 2008 national tests at Key Stage 2, unvalidated data show that more pupils reached the nationally expected levels in English and mathematics than in 2007. The improvement in mathematics, a specific weakness formerly, was particularly significant. Across the school standards are broadly average, although there is some variation in different year groups, and achievement is satisfactory.

The school's strenuous efforts to raise attendance are paying off and overall attendance is now close to national average. The behaviour of the majority of pupils is good, but a small minority continue to present challenging behaviour. The building refurbishments, enhanced curriculum and better teaching are all bringing benefits in terms of raising aspirations and self esteem. Pupils take pride in their work.

Teaching has improved, although it is not yet consistently good across the school. More than half of the lessons observed were good. This ensures that pupils are making at least satisfactory progress. Closer attention to individual needs in lessons, and a range of intervention strategies are ensuring that pupils who have fallen behind are able to make more rapid progress and catch up. The good curriculum provides a necessary focus on literacy and numeracy, but is enhanced by features such as the play and learn room at Key Stage 1, projects like 'Brilliant Bolton' and a wide range of clubs for pupils of different ages.

Pastoral care is a strength of the school. The learning mentor makes a valuable contribution to the support of pupils with particular emotional needs. Academic guidance is helping pupils to understand both what has been achieved and the next steps they need to take to improve their work.

Together with a new chair of governors, the headteacher and deputy headteacher form a strong leading team. Leadership at other levels is developing, but not yet strong enough so leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The increased pace of improvement in recent months gives clear indication of the school's good capacity to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

When they join the EYFS children's skills and abilities are generally in line with those expected for their age. However, some year groups have lower starting points. Children make good progress in all areas of learning, because they receive good teaching and a good range of stimulating learning activities. During the inspection children thoroughly enjoyed learning activities in preparation for the Christmas celebrations, such as: exploring ingredients and making a Christmas cake; busily working in the post-office and writing cards and labels, and reading seasonal books. Children are encouraged to explore things for themselves and share their ideas. Staff have high expectations and sensitively intervene to move children on in their

learning and boost esteem. As a result children develop positive attitudes to learning and can't wait to share their accomplishments: 'Look at my writing. I did it myself!' Effective induction procedures and good relationships between staff and children help children to settle in well and enjoy all the EYFS has to offer. Children are very well cared for. Good leadership of the EYFS ensures consistency of provision across both Nursery and Reception classes. The enthusiastic staff team are working hard to improve the quality of the outdoor learning activities further.

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

- Accelerate progress further to ensure that all children make consistent rates of progress throughout the school, and so raise standards further.
- Improve teaching and learning through monitoring, coaching and sharing the good practice that exists to ensure that it is consistently good across school.
- Develop the leadership and management skills of staff who are new to their roles to ensure that there is proactive management of all aspects of the school's work.

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 for all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Standards in Key Stage 2 are broadly average and have risen in mathematics, in particular. This is because a more accurate assessment of pupils' levels of ability means that learning activities meet the needs of different groups of learners more effectively. Teaching and learning in mathematics have improved as a result of consultant support and additional learning programmes to address areas of weakness. Although standards overall are generally in line with national expectations, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels remains below average. Across the school standards are broadly average but with some variation in different year groups. Standards in Key Stage 1 dipped in 2008. This partly reflects the low starting points of the pupils. School leadership has recently introduced more rigorous systems to keep a check on pupil progress and to provide more effective academic guidance. As a result inspection evidence confirms there are signs of pupils making faster progress, particularly in upper Key Stage 2.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Personal development and well-being are satisfactory overall. Childrens social and moral development are good, and their spiritual and cultural development satisfactory. Recent teaching and curriculum improvements help promote enjoyment of school. The school's hard work to improve attendance is paying off and this is now close to national average. Healthy lifestyles are encouraged. Clubs offer opportunities to participate in a variety of activities, including sports. Extra-curricular activities are available for children of different ages so that younger children, for example, enthusiastically join the choir. There are few opportunities at present for children to take up positions of responsibility in school, and there are plans to create more. The school council was involved in choosing new playground equipment. Along with other changes to the building and classrooms this is helping children to feel valued and contributing

to raising aspirations and self esteem. Children speak positively of the changes. The behaviour of many children is good both in lessons and around school, and most have good attitudes to learning. A small minority of pupils present challenging behaviour, which is generally well managed, using a range of resources to support the children and ensure that their learning is not impeded.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The quality of teaching continues to improve, and there is an increase in the proportion of lessons that are good. Lesson planning is more consistently providing work that meets the different levels of ability in a class, especially when teachers annotate their planning with the levels at which different groups of children are working. Teachers usually ensure that pupils are clear about what they are learning, the tasks they have to do and the reasons for doing the tasks. The pace of most lessons is brisk, often highlighted by fast-paced questioning. Most questions tend to draw out pupils' recall and the school is rightly planning to increase teachers' use of more open-ended questions to challenge the pupils' thinking and reasoning skills. The very best lessons include methods that make learning enjoyable and fun. Some areas for improvement remain. In some lessons pupils are expected to listen for too long and so become restless and less-motivated. Teachers are not always using strategies to manage effectively pupils with low concentration levels. While there is some good use of methods such as thinking time and talking partners that help pupils sort out their ideas before answering or writing, these are not used often enough. Checking and exploring the security of the pupils' learning, both during and at the end of the lesson, are not yet consistent.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good and has benefited from a number of improvements recently. Imaginative planning has led to the study of exciting topics such as 'Brilliant Bolton', 'Ourselves' and 'Celebrations'. Cross-subject themes of this nature enable the children to apply and improve their key skills in real and enthusing contexts. Educational visits and visitors to the school for all classes make the topics even more enjoyable and enriching. Planning shows the school's intention to embed this strong provision throughout the year and throughout the school. There is an appropriate focus on improving literacy and numeracy skills which has been effective in raising standards in these key subjects. Robust assessment and good planning have led to a good programme of support for those who require help to make up lost ground in basic skills. This term the school has made a committed and successful effort to expand its popular range of out-of-school activities. Pupils of all ages are involved. Children in Key Stage 1 now have a range of opportunities to develop their learning through play in a designated play and learn room. The room is managed by a teaching assistant who liaises with the teachers to develop play activities which link directly to the curriculum and this is furthering pupils' learning. There is a good programme to support the pupils' personal development, especially with regard to health education. Frequent access to information and communication technology (ICT) is giving the pupils good opportunities to develop their computer knowledge and skills.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 2

Pupils benefit from good pastoral support. They say they feel safe and know who to turn to if they have any concerns. A key characteristic is the high quality care provided by the school, especially for the more vulnerable pupils. The school runs additional programmes to help pupils talk about their own feelings and develop the personal and social skills to deal with issues for themselves. The learning mentor makes a very valuable contribution to this work. Strong partnerships with a range of external agencies support the more vulnerable pupils in overcoming any barriers to learning. Safeguarding procedures are sound. School leadership actively encourages good levels of attendance. For example, pupils are very keen to win the 'Attendance Bear' for their class each week! As a result of such initiatives and careful monitoring systems attendance levels have improved significantly. The quality of academic guidance has improved and this has been a key feature in pupils making more rapid rates of progress. Target setting systems are effective, because pupils are regularly involved in setting their own targets and in evaluating how well they are doing. Marking in the main shows pupils how well they are doing and provides clear guidance on how they can improve further.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Under the strong and effective leadership of the new headteacher the school has improved significantly in recent months. Capacity to improve further is good. The headteacher's clear vision, and excellent personal and communication skills, have changed the culture in school. With a child centred focus, and calm authority

combined with steely determination she leads a real drive for improvement. There are raised professional expectations for staff with respect to the quality of their

work, the environment they create and their aspirations for pupils. The headteacher is very ably supported by the deputy headteacher who complements her skills well. Leadership capacity at other levels is developing, but a number of staff are new to their roles. Key stage coordinators are in place and are beginning to make an impact, especially in Key Stage 2. Subject leadership roles have been allocated and training carried out. The local authority has provided effective support and the school has taken full advantage of the advice and guidance offered.

The environment of the school has been improved through refurbishments, which is helping raise aspirations. Pupils are taking pride in their work and good use is made of it in displays. Many events to encourage parent involvement have been organised and increased applications for school places are evidence of the improved reputation of the school in the local community. A recent questionnaire showed strong parental support for the school.

The school improvement plan identifies appropriate priorities and clearly shows actions, timescales and responsibilities. It is monitored rigorously. Checks on the quality of teaching and learning are thorough and focused where most needed. Identified weaknesses are acted upon. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked and underachievement tackled. Class teachers are required to plan specifically for those children who are not on track to attain their targets and a range of intervention strategies are in place for specific groups and individuals. There was notable success with interventions in the latter part of the 2007-08 academic year which helped to boost the Key Stage 2 results in 2008.

The new chair of governors has frequent contact with the school and supports the headteacher highly effectively. The governing body provides appropriate strategic direction. Several committee chairs are new to their roles and are undergoing training to support them as they develop their capacity to both support and challenge the school.



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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### 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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

## 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 Church Road Primary School, Bolton, BL1 5RU

Thank you very much for all the help you gave us when we visited to inspect your school recently. We were impressed by how polite you were and the way most of you behave sensibly. It was lovely to see all your work on display. We hope you really enjoyed the pantomime and theatre visit.

Your school has improved a lot recently and it is now providing you with a satisfactory education, meaning your school no longer requires 'special measures'. It was good to see how much smarter the building looks now. We are pleased that school council members were able to help choose the new equipment in the playground since we last visited.

The Nursery and Reception classes give you a good start to your education. Teachers and other staff look after and care for you very well. You have a good choice of clubs and other activities, and projects like 'Brilliant Bolton' and visits are helping to make learning more enjoyable for you.

More of you now attend school regularly. Teaching is satisfactory but some lessons are good and this is helping you to make better progress and reach average standards. The school has worked hard to help those of you who had fallen behind to catch up. The headteacher has lots of plans for the school, and together with the staff she is determined to make it even better.

We have asked the headteacher and staff to do three important things to help you all get as much as you can from your education. First, we want them to make sure that you all make as much progress as you can every year, so that you achieve even more. Second, we have asked the headteacher to keep working with your teachers to make more of your lessons as good as the best. Third, we want the school to make sure that where teachers take on extra responsibilities they are helped to develop the skills they need to do these jobs well.

You can help by coming to school every day and really working hard in all your lessons.