

# St Ann's Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104800
<b>Local Authority</b>	St Helens
<b>Inspection number</b>	324105
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Steve Rigby

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>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	421
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>	Rev Nicholas Anderson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs R Wilkinson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 November 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>	View Road Rainhill Prescot Merseyside L35 0LQ

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<b>Age group</b>	5–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 March 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	324105

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is much larger than average. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage from an area that is mixed, socially and economically. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average as is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There have been a number of staffing changes since the last inspection including the appointment of a new headteacher. In 2008, the school received the Activemark Award and the International School Award for Introducing Internationalism.

There is an out-of-school club on site which is run by a private provider and did not form part of this inspection.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

St Ann's is a good and improving school. The headteacher provides strong leadership in a school that works hard to create a caring and calm environment for learning. The quality of care and support pupils receive is good with their welfare a high priority. Pupils feel safe and happy and as a result, their attendance is good and behaviour exemplary. An overwhelming majority of parents express their support for the school and the pastoral care their children receive. 'Children are well behaved and respectful because their welfare is paramount', is typical of their positive views. The school ensures that risk assessments are in place and that it meets statutory requirements for safeguarding.

Pupils achieve well from their starting points. Standards at the end of Year 6 are above average in English, well above average in science and broadly average in mathematics. The school's as yet unvalidated results for 2008 show an even more positive picture in English, with more pupils achieving both the expected and above average levels for their age. The dip in 2007, when test results fell to average for the first time in 4 years, has been reversed. Writing results were particularly improved. School information on pupil progress indicates that standards for the current Year 6 pupils are on course to improve even further. Science is a particular strength of the school with standards at the end of Year 6 consistently well above average due to some outstanding teaching that stimulates pupils' interest. Standards in reading in Key Stage 1 remain an area for improvement. A concerted effort to boost pupils' achievement in this area is beginning to have an impact. The challenging targets set by the school are securely reached. Close tracking of pupils' progress is used effectively to inform teachers' planning and so ensures that there is a closer match of work to pupils' needs. This is accelerating progress.

The quality of teaching and learning overall has improved since the last inspection and is now good with some outstanding aspects in lessons. The atmosphere in the classrooms is very positive and a good relationship between adults and pupils ensures that good learning takes place. Learning assistants provide valuable support for small groups, which include those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and this enables them to be fully involved in all aspects of school life and to make good progress.

The curriculum is good and provides pupils with a range of well planned opportunities for learning during lessons and in out-of-school activities. Music and drama are particular strengths and create valuable links with the local community. For example, the choir and orchestra play to a range of audiences during the year. Residential visits and visitors are used well to enrich the provision further and create many opportunities for pupils to experience different cultures from their own. However, opportunities for the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support other areas of the curriculum are limited.

Leadership and management are good. Rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning and checking of pupils' progress takes place. The headteacher's clear vision for the future is detailed through a school improvement plan that is shared with staff and governors. Although the role of subject managers is satisfactory, it has not yet developed sufficiently to ensure the monitoring and evaluation of the performance of pupils in all subjects.

Communication with parents has improved with parents expressing their approval of the range of newsletters and text messages to provide them with up to date information about events. The governance of the school is good. The governors are well informed and committed to improving the school. They work closely with the headteacher in monitoring the school's

performance and are rightly pleased with the progress the school is making. Recent improvements in achievement, and teaching and learning demonstrate the school's good capacity to improve even further. The school provides good value for money.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

The provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. The recent building alterations have provided staff with the opportunity to reorganise the learning areas. Teachers and support staff are very well led and managed by a forward thinking coordinator as they constantly strive to improve the provision. Very strong teamwork is reflected in the good procedures that are in place. Staff ensure that care and welfare have an exceptionally high priority. Children arrive in the Reception classes from a wide range of settings. Thorough induction arrangements help them settle quickly. They make friends and learn how to treat each other and adults with respect and become happy learners. Parents are encouraged to become involved with their child's education and so important early links are forged between the home and school. Children's attainment on arrival is broadly in line with expectations, although for a significant minority, language skills are a weaker area. Through good teaching they make good progress particularly in the areas of knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development and, more recently, in communication, language and literacy. Pupils make good progress from their individual starting points, so that when they leave Reception, standards are at least as expected, with some children achieving above this level. Assessment arrangements are good with children's progress carefully tracked allowing the early identification of concerns and the allocation of additional support as required. The curriculum is thoroughly planned and effective in promoting children's development. Indoor and outdoor areas are vibrant and provide a relevant and appropriate focus on personal development and basic skills.

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

- To raise standards in English particularly in reading in Key Stage 1.
- To increase the opportunities for ICT to be used across the curriculum.
- To develop the role of subject managers to ensure the monitoring and evaluation of the performance of pupils in all subjects.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' achievement is good in relation to their individual starting points. They build solidly through Key Stage 1 on the good start made in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Progress is good in Key Stage 2, with particularly rapid gains now being made in Years 5 and 6. Overall standards by the end of Year 2 are broadly average, with the most recent school data showing improvements in writing and mathematics. In particular, there is an increase in the number of pupils reaching the higher than expected levels. However, reading within Key Stage 1 is a relatively weaker area. Overall standards have been above average at the end of Year 6, with a dip in 2007, reversed in 2008. Science is a significant strength with standards well above average by the time pupils leave Key Stage 2. The school has implemented a number of initiatives to raise standards. These are proving effective in increasing the rate of pupils' progress, particularly in Key Stage 2. Inspection evidence and school data show that the current Year 6 pupils are working well towards achieving above average standards. Good teaching and caring

classroom support ensure pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well and progress at the same rate as their classmates.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils show great enjoyment in all they do, from forming good relationships to behaving in an exemplary manner. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good with particular strengths in moral and social understanding. Older pupils take on responsibilities through a range of activities which they help to organise, including reading buddies. The school council members are proud to represent their peers and have played an active part in organising many of the facilities that are available to pupils such as the tuck shop and new school library.

During lessons, pupils are provided with numerous opportunities to work together in groups or pairs, which they use to good effect. They are eager to share opinions and ideas to solve problems. Their appreciation of other cultures is promoted well through the arts, and these opportunities also develop their ability to reflect on their own life experiences. Pupils are developing a more perceptive awareness of community cohesion and the wider global community. The school has recently been awarded the International School Award for Introducing Internationalism. Pupils have a good sense of how to live healthily and act safely, supported by the school's work towards the Healthy Schools Award. They enjoy fundraising and their efforts were recently recognised when some pupils were nominated and received the prestigious Young Persons' Achievement Award from the Princess Royal.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils progress well because teaching and learning are consistently good and sometimes outstanding. Lessons are lively and interesting, involving practical activities and a range of good resources. For example, in an outstanding science lesson pupils used a range of appropriate equipment which allowed them to explore the principles of pushing and pulling. Another stimulating and enjoyable lesson required pupils to provide an oral explanation of how something worked. This resulted in many opportunities for the pupils to develop their communication skills and work closely with partners sharing ideas.

Pupils' excellent behaviour impacts positively on their readiness to learn. Warm relationships between adults and pupils underpin the work of the school and teachers ensure that pupils feel secure in contributing to class discussions. Effective questioning is used to challenge pupils' ideas so they engage in deeper thinking, resulting in well considered and often mature responses. Lesson planning is good and ensures that work in lessons is well matched to pupils' different needs so that they are challenged and able to make good progress. The recently installed whiteboards are used to good effect to support learning. The school has good procedures in place to assess pupils' progress and to identify areas for improvement and these are having a positive impact in enabling pupils to make better progress. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution in supporting individuals and groups during activities but, in some instances, their role in the first part of the lesson is unclear and so less effective.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is effective and covers all subjects focusing on developing key skills in literacy, numeracy and science. The school is mindful of the need to provide greater opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills in other curriculum subjects to help develop their skills even further. The curriculum is enriched by a range of educational visits and visitors and the residential visits to Kingswood, London and France make a significant contribution to pupils' personal and social development. Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils enjoy the opportunities provided to learn Spanish and French. Music and drama play an important part in school life and this is shared through whole-school productions and assemblies. A community orchestra and the school choir also perform for a range of audiences throughout the year. Pupils develop their skills and talents outside lessons through a range of musical and sporting clubs, which many attend.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school takes good care of its pupils and all the required procedures for safeguarding are in place. The school provides an exceptionally high level of pastoral care for all its pupils. Good links with outside agencies make a strong contribution to the good provision for those who are vulnerable or who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Relationships are good and pupils feel comfortable talking about any worries with staff. Rigorous systems are in place to ensure good attendance. There are appropriate systems in place to ensure the safeguarding of pupils. Academic guidance through the tracking of pupils' progress and the setting of challenging targets is good. The marking of pupils' work is supportive and consistent. Group targets are identified and pupils' progress monitored against them. The school is currently developing marking further to allow individual pupil targets to be set and encourage pupils to be more involved in their next steps in learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides strong leadership and has been instrumental in raising the rates of pupils' progress. Parents rate her highly, perceptively reporting that, 'the headteacher has made a brilliant impact on this school and has made a lot of changes for the good of our children.' Increased opportunities for continuing professional development of staff have resulted in the improvement of teaching and learning overall. Teaching and learning and pupils' achievements are closely monitored to ensure that improvements are sustained and staff share accountability for pupils' progress. This results in greater ownership and a shared direction for the future improvement of the school. The school is aware that the middle management structures require further development to ensure a greater consistency in monitoring across all areas of the curriculum. The school actively supports community cohesion within the local and global community with pupils developing a secure awareness and understanding of its very diverse nature. This is a fully inclusive school providing equal opportunities for all of the pupils. The governing body work closely with the headteacher, school management team and the local authority. They are well informed and supportive and are well placed to act as a critical friend to the school and its work.



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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 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?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

### Achievement and standards

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

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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 learners' needs?</b>	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

## 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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

Inspection of St Ann's Church of England Primary School, Prescot, L35 0LQ

I would like to thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us when we inspected your school recently. Thank you for talking to us about your school and explaining how much you enjoy being a part of the school family. We are pleased that you enjoy your lessons and the many opportunities you have to go on visits and work with visitors to your school on exciting activities.

Your school is a good one that is improving because of good leadership and management. Your school leaders, teachers and support staff all help you to learn well and reach good standards in your work. All the staff also ensure you are safe and very well cared for. We are pleased that you feel that you have people to talk to if any worries arise. You have excellent manners and behaviour towards one another and the adults in your school. Your attendance and punctuality are good.

The adults in your school want you to do even better and so I have asked them to make sure that:

- you continue to work hard to reach your targets in English and particularly in your reading by the end of Year 2
- you have greater opportunities to use information and communication technology in your everyday work
- subject managers check your work closely to see how well you are doing.

We know the staff will help you all they can but you can also help by working hard and building on your improvements. Best wishes and good luck for the future.