

# St Luke's Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104897
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sefton
<b>Inspection number</b>	324127
<b>Inspection date</b>	5 February 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Derek Aitken

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.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	425
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>	Mrs Ruth Chapman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sharon Cowey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 June 2006
<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>	Jubilee Road Formby Liverpool Merseyside L37 2HW

<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date</b>	5 February 2009
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**Age group** 4–11

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils' achievement, the impact of measures taken to secure improvement on the key issues from the previous inspection and the rigour of the school's monitoring of teaching and learning. The inspectors gathered evidence from the school's self-evaluation, national published assessment data and the school's own assessment records, policies and minutes. The school was observed at work and discussions were held with the chair of governors, staff and pupils. Replies to the parents' questionnaires were also considered. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in similar detail, but the inspectors 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 the report.

## Description of the school

This two-form entry school is situated in the south-west of the town. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is low. The vast majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. The school has grown since the previous inspection and the number of children who join the school at times other than the beginning of the school term is slightly above average. The school makes provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage through two Reception classes. Most children have had some form of pre-school experience in local Nursery providers. The school holds several awards, including the Healthy Schools Award, Activemark, Artsmark Gold and the Eco Schools Silver Award.

## 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 with some outstanding features. Uppermost of these is the quality of the school's provision for pupils' pastoral welfare, which ensures that pupils feel safe, secure and happy in school. The parents of new pupils comment very favourably on the school's welcoming nature. Other parents commend, in particular, the high quality of the relationships between parents and school staff and the wide variety of extra-curricular opportunities enjoyed by the pupils. In this supportive environment pupils develop exceptionally well the personal qualities they require to succeed in later life.

From starting points which are generally typical for their age, children make good progress in Reception. By the time they commence Year 1, overall pupils' skills and knowledge are slightly above national expectations, although a few pupils are working at a lower level in some aspects of literacy, particularly their communication skills. Good arrangements for transition into Year 1 and adaptations to the Key Stage 1 curriculum ensure that pupils make good progress in their writing in this key stage. By the end of Year 2, standards are slightly above in all subjects. Pupils' growing maturity and the larger number of support programmes are key elements in pupils' good progress in Key Stage 2. In Year 6, standards have been very consistently above average in all subjects for several years. Inspection evidence indicates that this pattern is continuing and that pupils achieve well over time in school with no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very effectively helped by well trained teaching assistants. This enables these pupils to make the same good progress as their classmates. In these ways the school is effective in ensuring good outcomes for all pupils in their academic development.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding in almost all respects. Pupils have a highly developed awareness of how to stay healthy and keep safe. Older pupils are quick to act to help the youngest or new pupils feel at home in their unfamiliar surroundings. Pupils respond exceptionally well to reverential moments in assemblies. These moments of spiritual reflection are intertwined with reminders of personal responsibility to help pupils reflect on their personal goals and their duties towards others. The school is now providing opportunities, for example, through the activities of the Eco-Warriors group, for pupils to increase their understanding of global issues, including sustainable development. Church links with a school in Rwanda ensure pupils are acquiring a growing appreciation of multicultural issues. Pupils are confident, self-reliant and behave exceptionally well. The wide variety of sporting, musical and artistic activities on offer promotes pupils' social development exceptionally well. Pupils exploit other opportunities to contribute to the life of the school, as school councillors, monitors or play-leaders very well. Pupils' good achievement in the basic academic skills sets them up well for their later lives.

The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' academic and personal development. The school is successful in implementing new initiatives to enhance pupils' well-being, for example, through the SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) programme. Its untiring efforts to find new ways to enrich pupils' experiences have been recognised in its recent awards. Pupils have had the opportunity to learn a modern foreign language for a number of years and their interest in French is reflected well in their eagerness to follow up their learning by accessing computer software programs in the subject. Other curriculum initiatives, for example, to improve pupils' writing in Key Stage 2, have not yet had a perceptible impact on pushing standards higher.

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, but varies between satisfactory and outstanding. The best lessons are distinguished by varied and inventive teaching methods, which bring learning alive for pupils, for example, about ancient civilisations. Teachers productively encourage pupils to work in pairs to help them develop and express their ideas. This helps to build their self-confidence and verbal fluency. In all lessons good relationships ensure pupils are responsive. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and spice their lessons with dashes of humour. They recap prior knowledge and share relevant objectives for the lesson clearly so that all pupils know exactly what they have to learn. Teaching assistants' keen understanding of the needs of pupils they are supporting enables these pupils to keep up with their learning. On a few occasions, questioning and resources are not precisely related to the needs of all pupils or to lesson objectives and this restricts the challenge for more able pupils. Similarly, on a few occasions, the pace of learning drops which blunts both the focus of the lesson and pupils' enjoyment. Teachers provide pupils with useful verbal and written feedback. Pupils report that they find the ways the teachers mark their work very useful in helping them to improve.

The school cares for, guides and supports its pupils exceptionally well. It liaises very well with outside agencies to remove or reduce barriers to learning for those pupils with identified needs. It also works very successfully with parents and neighbouring secondary schools to ensure that pupils move smoothly between the various phases of their education. Relevant, required procedures are in place for child protection, for safeguarding pupils, and for health and safety. The school works assiduously to ensure that its challenging targets for attendance are met, and, consequently, attendance remains high. Academic guidance is good. The school has strengthened its tracking systems this academic year to both ensure that teachers and school leaders have more regular updates on pupils' progress and to inform lesson planning. This is providing sharper direction for support programmes. These improvements have not yet been fully effective in realising the school's aspirations for high, as opposed to good, achievement for its pupils.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and staff with leadership responsibilities are highly experienced, have strong aspirations for the pupils and provide clear direction for the work of the school. Staff work well together and are keen to develop their expertise further, for example, by acquiring best practice through collaboration in local learning networks. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion, constantly working to strengthen its links with the local community. The multicultural aspect of this work has been given momentum by the appointment of a coordinator for global diversity and useful initiatives are in progress to expand the school's contribution in this area. Key priorities are identified and actions are taken purposefully to enhance the enrichment experiences and welfare of pupils. The success of these efforts is amply demonstrated in pupils' impressive personal development. School self-evaluation is accurate in the main, but it is compromised in part by a lack of rigour in monitoring some aspects of teaching and learning. This is reflected in some over-optimistic judgements in the school's evaluation of its performance and in its records of lesson observations. These do not measure precisely enough the impact of actions taken to

improve the quality of pupils' learning. This, in turn, has reduced the effectiveness of the school's efforts to raise pupils' achievement to a higher level. Governors are highly effective and very committed to the school. Their well established links with subjects and other areas of the school's work enable them to play an active, questioning role in its development. Overall, the school has developed well since its previous inspection, offers good value for money and is well set for further improvement.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a good education for the children and as a result, they achieve well. Staff make good use of recent literacy initiatives to address areas of relative weakness in children's competencies, and to provide children with a firmer foundation for work in Year 1. Exceptional links with parents and thorough induction procedures help children to settle quickly into this very secure setting. All the recently introduced welfare requirements are fully met. Children are fully encouraged to grow up as healthy, active youngsters. They have ready access to healthy snacks and to the well-integrated outdoor curriculum, which provides them with ample opportunities for physical activity. Children are enthusiastic and increasingly independent learners, deriving full benefit from the well planned, varied curriculum. Teachers, teaching assistants and other adult helpers make a good contribution to their development and work successfully together to ensure children are taught effectively. Staff use a range of appropriate observations and methods both to assess children's progress and to plan next lessons, taking account of known or emerging children's needs. Although there is no teacher with sole responsibility for the Early Years Foundation Stage, the teachers' shared vision and common purpose ensure children make good all-round progress in their learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well.

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

- To help raise achievement ensure that systems for monitoring lessons are more sharply focused on the quality of pupils' learning.
- Make sure that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good or better.

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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?	1
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?	1
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?	2

### 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>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	1
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	2
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	1
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 Luke's Church of England Primary School, Liverpool,

L37 2HW

My colleague and I really enjoyed our inspection of your school. Thank you for being so friendly and helpful to us. It was good to see how interested you were in your 'special visitors'. I felt like the Pied Piper at morning break, answering your many questions!

You go to a good school and some parts of its work are excellent. These are some of the best things I found out about your school.

- Children get off to a good start in Reception. By the time you leave school in Year 6 your standards are above average in all subjects and you have made good progress.
- Your personal development is outstanding. You have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and keep healthy. I was also very impressed by your behaviour and the very good use you make of the many chances you have to develop your talents and to make a big contribution to the life of the school.
- Staff look after you well. It is no easy job to make sure everyone in a large school feels included. The staff work hard to make sure the older ones and younger or new pupils are valued and that you feel safe and happy.
- The headteacher and her senior staff direct the work of the school well.

I have asked your school to do the following to help to make it even better.

- Make sure that the checks school leaders carry out on the teaching look more closely at how well you are learning.
- Make sure all lessons are first rate.