

# St John's Church of England Primary School, Radcliffe

## Inspection report

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105349
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bury
<b>Inspection number</b>	324207
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 December 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Susan Walsh

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 aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	130
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 J Evans
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Elaine Standring
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 September 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>	Johnson Street Radcliffe Manchester Lancashire M26 1AW

<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 December 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	324207

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**Age group** 3–11

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional inspector.

## Description of the school

The school is smaller than most primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average and varies greatly between year groups. There is a small number of pupils whose first language is believed not to be English, but none of these pupils is in the early stages of speaking English. A significant number of pupils join the school after the Reception year and a similar number leave the school before they reach Year 6. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision includes part-time Nursery provision and a Reception class housed in a Foundation Stage unit. The school has been awarded Activemark and has gained Healthy Schools status.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school that has strengths in the way it promotes pupils' good personal development and in its provision for the EYFS. The headteacher is very dedicated to the school and its pupils, and has been pivotal in creating the school's friendly and caring ethos. The good attention paid to personal, social and health education ensures that pupils are well informed about how to stay healthy and safe. Pupils enjoy keeping fit and eagerly join in activities such as the dance club. Their opportunities to be involved in sport are extended through good links with the local high school. The curriculum is satisfactory overall, but there are good opportunities for enriching pupils' experiences. Pupils and parents appreciate the wide range of school clubs and trips, which help to make learning interesting, relevant and fun. Pupils really enjoy coming to school, but the attendance and punctuality of a minority of pupils is not as good as it should be and this holds back their progress. The nurturing environment and good relationships between pupils and staff encourage pupils to develop very positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour both in and out of the classrooms. Pupils learn to get on very well together and develop into confident individuals. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Safeguarding requirements are met. Parents say that teachers are 'friendly and helpful.'

When children start in the Nursery their skills are often very weak, especially in their social and emotional development and their speech. Pupils make satisfactory, but uneven, progress on their journey to the end of Year 6. Pupils make much better progress in Key Stage 1 and upper Key Stage 2 than lower Key Stage 2 because of variations in the quality of teaching and learning. Standards were below average at the end of Year 6 in 2007, but unvalidated results for 2008 suggest that standards improved to broadly average because a greater proportion of pupils reached the higher Level 5. Pupils' progress in mathematics is slower than their progress in English and science and, although standards in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 are improving, they are still below average. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, those who speak English as an additional language and those who join the school at other than the usual times make satisfactory progress. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. However, it is inconsistent in quality in Key Stage 2 where there are a minority of lessons where the work is not matched carefully enough to pupils' needs and expectations are too low.

The school is aware of its overarching strengths and weaknesses and, as a result, has sensible plans for improvement. However, aspects of the school's monitoring and evaluation are not strong enough, including the use of data. The school employs a wide range of intervention strategies to help pupils catch up, especially when they are at risk of falling behind at the end of lower Key Stage 2. However, the school does not always keep a close enough eye on the impact of those strategies or the academic progress of pupils who join the school late and those who have additional barriers to achievement. Although the school has faced many challenges, including decreasing numbers of pupils and the frequent flow of pupils in and out of the school, through satisfactory leadership and management it has managed to improve standards at the end of Key Stage 2, although there is still some way to go in mathematics. This demonstrates the school's satisfactory capacity to improve.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children achieve well in the EYFS because of good teaching combined with an exciting range of activities that provide ample opportunities for learning. Children get on well together and

they play happily on their own and with others. They are extremely friendly, enthusiastic and want to learn. This is because the activities provided have been very closely matched to children's interests and needs, and there is very good balance between activities that are chosen by children and those that are led and supported by adults. The outdoors is used effectively. Staff have very good questioning skills and they are able to skilfully develop children's thinking, and speaking and listening skills. Careful observations combined with good record keeping ensure that assessments are accurate and these are used well to plan activities that challenge children and move their learning on. Good leadership and management have made certain that staff have a very good understanding of how young children learn and have ensured that the welfare requirements of the EYFS are met. Staff work really well as a team but there is the potential to improve parental involvement.

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

- Improve achievement and standards in mathematics, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- Ensure greater consistency in the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 so that pupils learn more effectively.
- Enhance the monitoring and evaluation of the school's work, including rigorously checking the progress of different groups of pupils and the impact of intervention strategies.
- Make certain that all pupils attend school regularly and arrive on time.

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**

Although children have made good progress through the EYFS their skills are still below expectations when they join Year 1, especially in reading, writing and in their emotional and social development. By the end of Year 2 their standards are still below average, especially in writing. However, pupils have made satisfactory progress from their individual starting points. Progress is uneven in Key Stage 2. Pupils make better progress in Years 5 and 6 than they do in Years 3 and 4. Pupils make better progress in reading and writing than they do in mathematics but rates of progress are improving. By the end of Year 6, standards in English and science are similar to those reached by other pupils nationally and pupils are making satisfactory progress in these subjects. However, standards in mathematics are below the national average. Achievement is satisfactory overall. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities often make good progress when they are taught as part of small groups, but their progress is slower when they are taught as part of the whole class.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils like coming to school because they feel really safe and enjoy working with their friends. They comment positively on the 'friendship and teamwork'. Pupils' social development is particularly good as there is a strong focus on being a good citizen; consequently, there is a calm atmosphere in school and pupils are helpful and supportive towards each other. Pupils report some occasional name calling, but say it is dealt with well by their teachers. The drama work in Year 6 in association with a local theatre is helping pupils to understand emotions and moral dilemmas and to produce

high quality pieces of drama. The school council has arranged some exciting fundraising activities that also extend pupils' appreciation of other cultures. The mood in the playground is one of purposeful activity and fun because the 'playground buddies' do such a good job of organising games for younger children. Despite the school providing a safe environment and lots of enjoyable activities, a minority of pupils miss too much school and this slows their learning. This, together with below average standards in mathematics, has the potential to have a negative effect on pupils' futures so that despite their good social development and positive attitudes their future outlook is satisfactory rather than good.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Although teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, they vary in quality from outstanding to barely satisfactory. Teachers are very skilled at managing pupils' behaviour and relationships between staff and pupils are very good indeed. Interactive whiteboards are often used well to make lessons interesting and to support learning. In the better lessons, the work set is matched closely to pupils' needs but this is not consistent and, in some lessons, particularly in mathematics, pupils of very differing abilities are set the same work. Expectations are variable. They are particularly high in Year 6 and pupils rise to the challenge, but in some classes the expectations regarding presentation and the volume of work are too low. In many lessons, pupils are learning through practical experiences but, occasionally, pupils' learning slows as they sit and watch others who are more actively involved. Learning support assistants make a good contribution to supporting those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; however, there are occasions when these pupils are relatively uninvolved during the introductions to lessons.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum promotes academic achievement satisfactorily, but is particularly good at promoting enjoyment and pupils' positive social development. The curriculum in Year 1 is especially well matched to these pupils' requirements because it takes into account their need to learn through active and practical experiences. The introduction of a programme that helps children to make links between sounds and letters is helping to accelerate achievement in reading and writing in the EYFS and Key Stage 1. Provision for literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology is satisfactory. However, the curriculum in Key Stage 2 does not build consistently on previous learning and there are examples of pupils of differing abilities and in different year groups being set the same work, particularly in mathematics. The curriculum is very good in Year 6 where better links are being made between subjects. Pupils particularly enjoyed the Second World War topic which was used to develop their research skills, their knowledge and understanding of history and geography and to simulate writing. The highlight of the topic was the visit to the Imperial War Museum which the pupils describe as 'brilliant' and was clearly a moving spiritual experience for many of them.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 3

There is a very welcoming, compassionate ethos that contributes well to pupils' personal development. Those pupils who join the school at other than the usual times are made very welcome by pupils and staff. Vulnerable pupils are well supported and this makes a considerable contribution to their individual development. A minority of pupils join the school with poor attitudes and challenging behaviour but staff, with the help of external agencies, work hard to encourage pupils to develop self-discipline and learn to manage their feelings and emotions. The school is working in partnership with the education welfare officer to encourage regular school attendance, but there is not enough regular personal contact with parents. The quality of academic guidance is variable. There is some good quality marking and oral guidance, particularly in Key Stage 1, but the quality of marking is inconsistent in Key Stage 2. The setting of academic targets is developing, but use of these to promote progress is still uneven.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Leaders and managers have created a very friendly school where pupils can flourish in a supportive environment. The work of the hard-working headteacher is supported enthusiastically by a team of senior leaders who carry a somewhat heavy workload because of the relatively small size of the school. The development of team responsibilities is helping to spread the load. Although some of the judgements the school made about itself prior to the inspection were too generous, it nevertheless is aware of where it needs to improve and, with the help of the local authority, has developed rational plans to support improvement. Although monitoring and evaluation are satisfactory, much is done by the headteacher with more limited involvement from subject coordinators, who have not had sufficient opportunities directly to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning. Target setting is satisfactory, but the school has not made enough checks of the progress of different groups of pupils, nor has it accurately measured the success of its intervention programmes. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion. It is helping pupils to understand other faiths and cultures and to become more involved in their own community. The governing body has recently been strengthened and is supportive of the school's work.





## 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	3

### 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>	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	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

<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?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

## 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**

Thank you for being so friendly and polite when I came to inspect your school. I really enjoyed talking to you all and listened very carefully to what you had to say. You go to a satisfactory school with lots of good things to celebrate, such as the way you grow into such confident young people. It's clear that you have a fun time at school because of all the interesting things you have to do. I thought you were very well informed about how to keep healthy and safe. I was impressed by your good behaviour and the way you all get on well together. Members of your school council are doing a good job and organise exciting events, and the playground buddies are very good at helping younger pupils to enjoy their playtimes. I wanted to say a special thank you to Year 6 for inviting me to see their wonderful interpretation of the witches in Macbeth. I was also very impressed with the fantastic Christmas cakes they made. They looked delicious!

You told me that your teachers look after you well and that they always try to help you. Younger children have a great time at school and are doing well because of good teaching. You are making satisfactory progress overall across the rest of the school. By the end of Year 6, the standards you are reaching in English and science are similar to those reached by other pupils nationally and you are making satisfactory progress in these subjects. I have asked your teachers to help you to reach higher standards in mathematics. Although there is some really good teaching in your school, overall, teaching is satisfactory because it is not quite as good in some classes as others. I have asked your teachers to make sure that all teaching is of the same high quality.

I know that managers are working hard to make your school a better place, but I have asked them to make more detailed checks on how well the school is doing. I noticed that some of you miss too much school and some of you are late too often. You are missing important lessons and it's clear that this is holding back your progress. I have asked the school to improve this too. You could really help by coming to school regularly and not being late.