

# Holy Cross and All Saints RC Primary School

## Inspection report

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105952
<b>Local Authority</b>	Salford
<b>Inspection number</b>	324302
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jim Crouch

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)	234
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. Ryan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Vincent Sheedy
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 October 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>	Trafford Road Eccles Manchester Lancashire M30 0JA

<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 November 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	324302

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**Age group** 3–11

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is an average sized school with Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision in the form of a Nursery class and a Reception class. It is situated in Barton-upon-Irwell and serves a community which experiences some social disadvantage. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds, but the small proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds is increasing, as is the proportion who are at an early stage of learning English. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, and the proportion with a statement of special educational need is average. The number of pupils who join or leave the school at other than the usual times is higher than average. The school is an Investor in People, an accredited Healthy School and also holds the British Council International School 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. It is inclusive with a real sense of community spirit which embraces the staff, pupils, parents and governors. It is highly valued by parents. Visitors are welcomed by pupils who are proud of their school and talk confidently about why they enjoy being there. Behaviour is outstanding and pupils show a real enthusiasm for learning. They feel safe and care well for each other. Pupils show a very good awareness of how to behave safely and develop healthy lifestyles by choosing to eat fruit at break times and joining in the good range of sporting activities provided by the school. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding with, for example, circle time being used well by pupils to raise concerns and to reflect on how they can contribute to improving the lives of others. The few pupils from minority ethnic groups are well integrated into the school because of the good interpersonal relationships that exist. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities such as house captains and play leaders and have contributed to school improvement, particularly through the work of the school council. They show good community awareness, working to improve the school environment and holding charity fundraising activities. The majority of pupils attend well. However, the persistent absence of a small number of pupils means that, despite the school's intensive support for these pupils and their families, overall attendance remains close to the national average.

Children join the school with skills and abilities that are below those expected for their age. In recent years there has been some disruption to learning, due mainly to changes in staffing and to the relatively large number of pupils joining and leaving the school at other than the usual times. As a result, standards at Key Stage 2 dropped to below average in 2007. The school has responded well to the challenges this situation presented. Improvements in the monitoring of pupils' progress and the strengthening of the senior leadership through, for example, the appointment of an improvement coordinator, have enabled the school to identify and address specific areas of underperformance quickly. Consequently, pupils are now making good progress, are achieving well and standards are above average. However, standards in mathematics at Key Stage 2 are still lower than in English and science.

Teaching is good overall. In the strongest lessons, teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure that all pupils are challenged and take an active part. As a result, pupils are eager to learn, persevere well with activities and respond positively to encouragement. However, in less successful lessons the work does not provide a good level of challenge for all groups of learners, particularly the more able. In these lessons, progress is not as good as it might be. Recent improvements in the provision for literacy and numeracy mean that the curriculum now provides a good balance between developing these and other basic skills and raising pupils' knowledge and understanding about the world in which they live. Theme weeks, a good range of sporting, musical and creative experiences and many school visits increase pupils' enjoyment of school and enrich their all-round learning.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and governors have created a supportive school where staff work well together to provide good care, guidance and support for pupils. There is an agreed vision for the school and a well planned approach to developing the confidence and competence of teachers and teaching assistants, as indicated by the school's Investors in People status. This means that increasingly good use is made of the school's resources. The school works very well with outside organisations to promote the well-being of

all pupils. It has successfully addressed issues raised in the last inspection and under the purposeful leadership of the headteacher, has good capacity for further improvement.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Children join the Nursery with below age-related skills, particularly in speaking and listening. They achieve well in their learning and development and most work securely within the nationally expected goals at the end of the EYFS. A strong emphasis on promoting good care and personal development means that children behave well, are well cared for, learn to work very well with each other and begin to appreciate the importance of, for example, eating healthily. Children make good progress in the EYFS because it is well led and managed and the staff work well as a team. Well planned induction arrangements mean that children settle in quickly and valuable links are established with parents. Children are happy. They feel safe in the inviting and stimulating learning environment and enjoy the challenge of active learning. Observations of children's learning are recorded regularly to provide a coherent picture of each child's development over time and enable teaching to be well matched to individual needs. Resources to promote learning, both indoors and outside, are good. However, these are not always used to best effect, because there is not a sufficient emphasis on child-led activities, or sufficient opportunities for children to move freely between the indoor and outdoor areas.

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

- Increase the amount of child-initiated learning and ensure that children are able to move freely between the indoor and outdoor provision in the EYFS.
- Raise standards in mathematics.
- Ensure that teaching consistently provides a good level of challenge for all groups of learners and, in particular, the more able.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enter Year 1 with skills and abilities that are close to those expected for their age. In recent years, most groups of learners made satisfactory progress through Key Stages 1 and 2. However, in 2007, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 were below average, particularly in mathematics and science. The detailed tracking of the progress of different groups of learners and improvements in the analysis of the performance of individual pupils at Key Stage 2 have enabled the school to identify and address a number of key areas of underperformance. Actions taken to address these have included a whole-school approach to improving mental mathematics skills and the introduction of 'Boxing Clever' to raise standards of literacy. These initiatives and increased support for individuals have had a positive impact. Most groups of learners, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are now making good progress, are achieving well and are reaching above average standards. However, progress is not as good in mathematics as it is in English and science and some pupils, especially the most able, could be challenged further.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils enjoy coming to school because, as some say, 'Every one gets on so well with each other'. Behaviour is exceptionally good. Pupils say there is very little bullying and that 'No one is left

out', because they make good use of arrangements such as the friendship stop and circle time. Pupils welcome visitors by holding doors open and smiling, or saying 'hello'. They show a very good awareness of how to stay safe and keep healthy. They enjoy joining the before and after-school activities, such as the morning exercise sessions, which not only contribute to their health and fitness, but also encourage good attendance and punctuality. Pupils take good account of the feelings of others and understand the difference between right and wrong. Good links with the church and a number of schools across Europe, together with a rich and diverse range of themed weeks mean that pupils have a very good understanding of their own faith and of other faiths and cultures. Eco Monitors care for the environment and take pride in the role they play. Prefects, bench buddies, early years helpers and hall monitors are just four examples of the outstanding contribution pupils make to the school community. Their generous fundraising demonstrates their commitment to supporting others in the wider community. All of this contributes well to their good progress. Improving standards of literacy and numeracy, good computer skills and good opportunities to develop enterprise skills mean that pupils are making good progress in preparing for their future economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning varies between satisfactory and outstanding, and is good overall. Teachers make good use of praise and rewards and pupils are confident to contribute their ideas because they know they will be listened to. Teachers use their secure subject knowledge to plan interesting and enjoyable lessons. However, in some lessons the needs of different groups of learners, particularly the more able, are not well met, because they are not given an appropriate level of challenge. As a result, they do not progress as well as they might. Most lessons are taught at a good pace. Starters are used well to engage pupils and reinforce prior learning. Teachers make good use of questions and strategies such as 'talking partners' to ensure that everyone is involved in learning. The school's inclusive philosophy and determination to put teaching into contexts that are relevant to pupils was very well demonstrated in one outstanding lesson. Differentiated activities were used, along with high quality support from the teacher and teaching assistant. As a result, every pupil was well prepared to contribute to a debate on the proposed congestion charge for Manchester. Marking in English is very good because it consistently gives pupils clear guidance on what they have achieved and what they need to do to improve. However, this practice is less evident in other subjects. Resources are used effectively to enhance learning although, despite the teachers' best efforts, the small and restricted accommodation for Key Stage 2 pupils limits opportunities for more active forms of learning.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum takes account of pupils' cultural heritages and the community served by the school. Recent improvements in the literacy and numeracy curriculum have contributed to improved progress across the school and there is additional and improving provision for those who need extra help. The curriculum contributes very well to pupils' personal development. In particular, the links with a number of schools across Europe bring a strong international dimension to pupils' learning. The topic-based approach to the teaching of some subjects and the use of theme weeks, the most recent of which was focused around the 150-years history

of their own school, contribute well to pupils' enjoyment and achievement. A good range of extra-curricular activities improves pupils' health and fitness and enriches learning. The use of visiting speakers and visits, including a residential for all Key Stage 2 pupils, enlivens the curriculum and increases pupils' awareness of the world in which they live.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Parents recognise and value the good levels of care and support provided by the school. This is reflected in such comments as, 'It is a truly caring school that nurtures children to achieve their individual best.' The provision of an after-school club reflects this good pastoral care. Systems to safeguard pupils are in place and pupils are confident to talk to staff about issues that concern them. The significant numbers of pupils who join the school other than at the usual time say they settle in very quickly because of the good arrangements made by the school. Year 6 pupils say that they feel well prepared for the move to their next school. The procedures for identifying and supporting vulnerable pupils are efficient and well managed. Excellent links with a wide range of support agencies mean that support for individuals is quickly put into place. However, support for gifted and talented pupils is less well developed. Pupils know their targets in English and mathematics, but are less well informed in other subjects, including science. Reports to parents are detailed and focus on the progress that their children are making.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The school is well led and managed to provide good value for money. Effective self-evaluation means that senior leaders have a clear view of the school. They are fully aware of the key areas for improvement and actions already taken have led to improved progress and standards. There is a strong sense of common purpose among staff, who feel fully involved in the life of the school. Staff development is linked directly to performance management. This means that the resources of the school are well used and staff are confident and well prepared to take on further responsibilities. Subject leaders have a good understanding of their roles. They provide good guidance through their schemes of work and evaluate the learning in their subject through, for example, lesson observations and work scrutiny. The school's good contribution to community cohesion is evident in its support for parents and the parish and in its international links. Governors provide good support for the school and its pupils. However, they do recognise the need to improve their understanding of some aspects of school life so that they can increase the level of challenge and support they provide for 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?	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?	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?	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	3
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	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 Holy Cross and All Saints RC Primary School, Manchester, M30 0JA

As you know, two inspectors came to your school recently to find out how well you are learning. Everyone made us feel welcome and helped us to find out about your school. We found that your school gives you a good education. We were particularly impressed by your outstanding behaviour and your keenness to do well in lessons.

You all make a very good contribution to the life of the school and clearly know how to live healthily. You show very good awareness of the needs of others in many ways, including through your charity work. The staff have worked hard to help you enjoy your education by developing a good curriculum with lots of extra activities and visits. We found that your school looks after you well and that, because the teaching is good, you make good progress.

There are three important things we think could be better. I have asked the school to make sure that children in the Nursery and Reception classes have more chances to plan for themselves what they are going to do in lessons, including whether this should take place in the classroom, or outside. I have also asked them to help older pupils reach higher standards in mathematics. Finally, I have asked them to make sure that all of you, particularly those of you who find learning easy, are given appropriately challenging work so that you can make better progress.

Of course, you also have an important part to play in helping your school to carry on improving. You can do this by continuing to be as positive about learning as you are now and keep trying to improve all aspects of your work.

Thanks again for making us feel so welcome.