

# Eccleston St Mary's Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119472
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	327046
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 September 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jennie Platt

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	203
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 Iain Templeton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Bill Mann
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 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>	The Green Eccleston Chorley Lancashire PR7 5TE

<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 September 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	327046

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**Age group** 4–11

**Inspection dates** 23–24 September 2008

**Inspection number** 327046

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

St Mary's is an average size primary school. As a church school, it is closely involved with both the local and wider communities. Before and after school care is available. Most pupils live in the local area which is socially and economically advantaged. Few pupils are entitled to a free school meal. The great majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is low but the number with a statement of special educational need is average. A very small number of pupils are in the care of the local authority. The school provides education for 30 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## 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. It is a community in the real sense of the word with all involved playing a full role in making this a happy and friendly school. It is clear why it is so popular with parents and is oversubscribed in an area where pupil numbers are falling. One parent summed up the views of many stating 'I think it is a true village school; you feel part of the community and the staff really do care about their pupils.' The excellent quality of care makes a huge contribution to this harmonious ethos because parents and pupils are confident that the pupils' well-being is at the heart of the school's provision.

Achievement is good. Pupils start school with skills and abilities that are above what is typical for their age. By the end of Year 6, standards are well above average. National test results at the end of Key Stage 2 are impressive with a high proportion of pupils exceeding the level expected for their age. In 2007, teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 were above average in reading and broadly average in writing and mathematics. The varying ability of the cohorts affect the overall standards but early indications are that standards in 2008 are similar. At Key Stage 1 most pupils make at least satisfactory progress but some more able pupils do not always make the progress that they should.

Effective teaching and the good curriculum contribute to the overall good progress. Teaching is particularly effective in Key Stage 2 where some outstanding practice was seen. In these lessons, teachers had high expectations and inspired their pupils by using a variety of approaches that ensured pupils remained motivated and eager to learn. Improvements made to the school's procedures to track pupils' academic progress have led to an effective system which now checks more regularly on pupils' progress. This is reaping benefits for the older pupils as teachers adjust work and particularly challenge the more able pupils. This is less evident in Key Stage 1 where some lessons lack sufficient challenge and the pace of learning is not always brisk enough to sustain pupils' enthusiasm for learning. Throughout the school, the careful preparation of resources and effective management lead to lessons running smoothly. There is some excellent richness within the curriculum and parents are justifiably pleased with the vast range of opportunities available for their children. Music plays a large part in school life and displays show high quality art work. Provision for personal and social development is a strength of the curriculum and ensures pupils have an excellent understanding about keeping safe and healthy.

Personal development is outstanding. Pupils grow into responsible youngsters because they have been given many opportunities to learn the important skills of living in a community. They are taught to respect each other in line with the school's Christian principles and, as a result, relationships are excellent and many firm friendships established. Pupils sensitively support each other and understand the importance of caring for both their local and wider communities. Their secure basic skills and confidence to work both independently and with others mean they have an excellent foundation for the future. Pupils' enjoyment of school is very clear and it is not surprising attendance is above average.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher is an excellent leader who has the complete confidence of the parents. His efforts to improve the building and extend links with the community have resulted in spacious accommodation and a school which has an excellent reputation in the locality. The school evaluates its work closely and has a clear understanding of areas needing attention. This has led to effective attention to writing in Key Stage 2 and a notable rise in standards. However, actions to tackle other priorities are not as successful

because subject leaders are not monitoring closely to ensure that the planned changes will have an impact on standards. Governance is good. A real strength in the management of the school is the inclusion of pupils with special needs. As one parent said, 'staff embrace the challenge'. This can be seen daily in the staff's dogged determination to ensure all pupils play a full part in all the school has to offer. Value for money and capacity to improve are good.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Children are extremely happy in the Reception class and parents are very appreciative of the sensitive way their children have been introduced to school. Even at the very start of their school life, they run happily into class eager to get on with the day. They are extremely well cared for and staff are alert to any little mishaps or worries that can upset a child at this important time. Parents are fully involved and are given ideas to help their children at home. From a starting point that is higher than usually seen for this age, children make good progress and leave the Reception class with standards higher than expected. Teaching is good. Staff have a good understanding of the needs of this age group. They plan imaginative activities and allow time for children to work independently as well as to be part of a teacher led activity. Occasionally, it is unclear what children are expected to learn but overall planning is good. Many resources are of excellent quality although some role play resources are old and do not encourage imaginative play. Management of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is good because the Reception teacher has a good overview of what is happening. However, it is unclear who has the overall management of this key stage and so many changes are informal without clear procedures to monitor their effectiveness.

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

- Improve the progress of the more able pupils in Key Stage 1.
- Clarify the monitoring roles of subject leaders, including the leader of the EYFS, and check that suggested changes are more closely linked to their impact on standards.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good. From starting school with skills that are higher than is usual for their age, pupils make good progress and standards at the end of Year 6 are well above average. Children get off to a good start in the EYFS but do not maintain quite the same momentum in Key Stage 1. Results of teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 are affected by the differing abilities of the cohort. In 2007, results were above average in reading and broadly average in writing and mathematics. Early indications show a similar picture for 2008 although writing is improving. Although most pupils make satisfactory progress, the more able pupils could achieve more in all subjects. Progress accelerates in Key Stage 2 where some teaching is outstanding. Results of national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 are impressive. Standards have been consistently well above average in mathematics and science. English was broadly average in the 2007 test results because writing was not as high as the other subjects. Prompt action and closer monitoring of progress has led to improvements and standards in English now match the other subjects. A good proportion of pupils exceed the level expected for their age.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the more vulnerable pupils make good progress because their needs are identified promptly and support readily available. Pupils with a statement of special educational need make excellent progress to meet their individual targets.

This is because staff are trained to meet the pupils' specific needs and the supporting adults show great care and patience to provide the very best for these pupils.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and this is reflected in their exemplary attitudes to learning, above average attendance and excellent behaviour. Social and moral development is excellent as reflected in the very caring ethos of the school. Pupils are courteous and polite. It is a delight to see pupils of different abilities and backgrounds all playing together happily together. Pupils have an excellent understanding about how to lead safe and healthy lifestyles. They recall the important messages from the community policeman and other visitors and say they feel safe and know how to look after themselves. Their energetic play and involvement in sport reflects their strong determination to keep healthy. Bullying and racist incidents are not a problem. Pupils accept willingly responsibilities to improve their school community and further afield. They know the importance of caring for the environment and also raise funds for many charities. Members of the school council have a voice in the community and influence decisions especially in relation to purchasing school equipment.

Spirituality is outstanding. The wonderful singing in assemblies brings the whole school together in their act of worship. Cultural development is good. Pupils gain an understanding of other faiths but their experience of cultures other than their own is underdeveloped. Year 6 pupils leave school as well rounded young adults. They are excellently prepared, both socially and academically, for the future.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good although variable throughout the school. Some outstanding teaching was seen in Key Stage 2 where teaching engages the pupils' interest and the pace of learning is fast. Pupils say work is harder as they get into the older classes and the challenge is clearly evident in the work set for them. This is not the case in Key Stage 1 where work is not always tailored correctly to pupils' needs. Expectations, particularly for the more able pupils are not high enough. Throughout the school pupils respond to work extremely well, partly due to the good relationships that exist between staff and learners. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively in lessons. Books are marked regularly and many teachers include useful comments to tell pupils how to improve.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good with some outstanding features. The emphasis on personal development is highly effective and pupils are taught how to respect and value each other. Many nationally recognised awards have been achieved including Healthy Eating and Activemark Sports Award. A good balance between academic, physical and creative development makes the school day exciting. The noise of musicians practising is a regular feature of the day and inspirational artwork adorns the walls. All pupils enjoy the opportunity to learn a modern foreign language. An exemplary range and variety of out of school activities enrich the curriculum. These play a major role in developing pupils' skills, attitudes and self-esteem.

The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully met and parents appreciate the individual help that enables their children to access the curriculum and make good progress. In Key Stage 1, the needs of the more able are not fully met. Occasionally, teachers use workbooks too much and this limits the variety of the curriculum being offered.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school provides a highly supportive ethos which is based on the teachings of the Christian church. Each child is valued as an individual in line with the school's mission statement. Consequently, pupils learn in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust. They express great confidence in the staff, reassured that help is at hand if needed. Procedures are in place to make sure that all pupils are kept safe. These procedures are reviewed on a regular basis and shared with all members of staff.

Improved procedures to track pupils' academic progress are having a very positive effect on the guidance given to pupils. Pupils who need extra support are identified at an early stage and support given, usually in small groups. This has focused more on the lower attaining pupils and the rise in the number of pupils reaching the level expected for their age is evident in the results of national assessments. The school is making good headway in including pupils in their own learning. In many lessons, pupils have detailed check lists which enable them to evaluate effectively how they have got on and how they can improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Under the excellent leadership of the headteacher, the school has put in place an effective strategy that places the school at the heart of the local community. Many connected to the school talk enthusiastically about events during and beyond the school day. The headteacher leads a team of dedicated staff and this is reflected in the consistently high standards reached by pupils when they leave the school. Improvement since the last inspection is good.

Although self-evaluation is too positive in some aspects, this is a school that knows itself well. Monitoring of performance effectively identifies weaker aspects and in writing in Key Stage 2 the impact of change can clearly be seen in rising standards. The school is aware that improvement is needed in Key Stage 1 and the new tracking systems already embedded in Key Stage 2 are starting to reap benefits for the younger pupils. It is not always clear how other priorities will raise standards because subject leaders do not clarify how their planned interventions will impact on standards. Their monitoring role to evaluate the success of change is underdeveloped.

Governors bring a wealth of experience to the school and have been particularly instrumental in raising the profile of the school which means it is oversubscribed in an area of falling population. Parents are extremely pleased with the education provided.





## 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?	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	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	1

## 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?	1

## 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**

25 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Eccleston St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Lancashire, PR7 5TE

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. Your help and friendliness made sure we had an enjoyable time. We found that you go to a good school and some features are outstanding. At the top of the list is your personal development. Your behaviour is excellent. You work very hard and are considerate to adults and each other. You support each other so that the school has a family and friendly atmosphere. It was lovely to see the older pupils sitting and chatting with the younger ones at lunchtime. The way the staff care for you is excellent and you told us you feel safe in school. The amazing display of trophies shows your success in sport and it was clear you enjoy being energetic and keeping healthy. We were amazed to see so many clubs and activities happening. It is no wonder you all say that you enjoy school.

Teaching is good and your results in national tests at the end of Year 6 are impressive. They are often well above average. The children in the Reception class get off to a good start. You have all welcomed them into your school community so that they have settled well and are enjoying school. We have asked the school to look at the progress pupils make in Years 1 and 2 to make sure that all pupils are making as much progress as possible. The school is also going to make sure that all the changes that staff make are helping you all to do as well as possible.

We are sure you will all have a wonderful year at school especially with the many outings and performances that are planned for you. We wish you much happiness for the future.

Yours sincerely

Jennie Platt and Barbara Martin

Inspectors