

## St John with St Mark CofE Primary School

### Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	133929
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bury
<b>Inspection number</b>	328770
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Heap

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 controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	291
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>	Mr Wilfred Davison
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs J Moore
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 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>	Athlone Avenue Bury Lancashire BL9 5EE
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 764 5330
<b>Fax number</b>	0161 764 5330

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This larger than average sized primary school serves an ethnically diverse area and includes refugees/asylum-seekers and children looked after by the local authority. A large proportion is at the early stage of learning English as an additional language and the main first languages are Punjabi and Urdu. There are significant signs of social and economic disadvantage and the number of pupils entitled to free school meals is almost twice the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. Children's skills on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are well below expected levels. The school provides extended services, such as before and after-school clubs. The school has achieved the nationally accredited Healthy 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

Inspectors agree with the school that it is good and that it provides good value for money. Pupils and the majority of parents who completed questionnaires are satisfied with the school. A typical view from parents is, 'My daughter is happy in school. She has progressed well in all areas throughout her years in school.' The school continues to meet its various challenges, continues to make good improvement and is well placed to improve further.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They benefit from the ways the good curriculum and pastoral care successfully promote their confidence and self-esteem. This begins in the EYFS, where the children make excellent progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Pupils like coming to school and have very good attitudes to learning. Moral and social development is strong and pupils behave well in class and in other activities. Staff monitor pupils' behaviour closely because it is clear that some pupils are challenging and need to be managed well. Pupils have a good understanding of how important it is to have a healthy and safe lifestyle. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the life of the school and older ones contribute equally strongly in the wider community.

Standards on entry to Year 1 are below average. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 but their attainment in writing and mathematics lags behind that in reading. Any decline in standards has been arrested. Progress accelerates in Key Stage 2 and pupils reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6, demonstrating good achievement overall from their starting points. Current standards in reading and mathematics are the highest in the school's history. Pupils with learning difficulties, pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, those learning English as an additional language and those in the care of the local authority make good progress and achieve well in relation to their starting points. These pupils and the other smaller groups benefit well from the school's provision and from the support provided by the school's good partnerships with outside agencies. Pupils are developing the strong basic skills that are necessary for success in future education and work.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The strongest work is done in the EYFS and in Key Stage 2, where the teaching and learning have good pace and resources are used well to interest and motivate pupils to learn. Variations in the pace of learning and in progress made are due to inconsistencies in the guidance and support provided for pupils. For example, despite the assiduous monitoring and recording of pupils' academic achievements, the information is not always used well enough to set challenging individual learning targets. Moreover, the marking of pupils' work does not provide pupils with a clear picture of how well they are meeting targets and what they need to do to improve further.

Leadership and management are good. Senior managers know and understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The school sets challenging targets and continues to move towards meeting them. Provision is well planned so that all pupils have an equal opportunity to benefit from all the school offers. However, the measures of success in the school improvement plan are not sharp enough to ensure that pupils' progress is consistently good across the school. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are supportive and fulfil their legal duties adequately.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

The good provision in the EYFS is a strength of the school. Children enter the Nursery with very low levels of skills across all areas of learning, but particularly in communication and in their personal, social and emotional development. By the end of Reception, skill levels are below expectations but most children make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress, particularly in these weakest areas. This is due to high quality teaching that is paced, challenging and targets children's specific needs. The indoor and outdoor learning environments are rich in opportunities for investigation, exploration and developing independence. As a result, children show good levels of curiosity and concentration, for example, in the bear hunt activity. Boys retold the story they had heard, whilst using the 'cave' to present the main parts of the action. They explored the cave with the torch they requested while other children watched and listened intently. Staff have an excellent appreciation of how children at this age learn and more specific support is also provided, for instance, through dual language provision. Leadership and management are outstanding and have led to marked improvements in provision and in the progress children make. Partnerships with parents are well established and the dual language work helps children and parents share their learning.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve teaching to raise standards and improve achievement in Key Stage 1.
- Improve the link between target-setting and marking, so that pupils have a clear picture of how well they are doing and what they need to do next.
- Sharpen the measures of success in the school improvement plan so that all staff know what they need to do to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

In Key Stage 1, achievement is satisfactory and standards are well below average. Current school information and inspection evidence demonstrate that reading and mathematics are stronger than writing. Over time, results in national tests at the end of Year 2 have been consistently well below average but the decline in standards has been arrested. In Key Stage 2, pupils achieve well and standards are currently broadly average to below average. In national test results at the end of Year 6, standards have often been well below average. However, there has been a significant improvement in reading and mathematics standards over the past 18 months, both at the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5, which have exceeded the targets set. Writing standards lag behind because there is not enough rigour in the target-setting and marking and because opportunities to write are missed across the range of subjects.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, pupils learning English as an additional language and those in other groups are well supported and make good progress.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Relationships are strong. Assemblies, such as those about values, play a large part in pupils understanding the importance of working collaboratively and cooperatively. Moreover, pupils meet the exceptionally high expectations the school places on them to contribute to the range of communities to which they belong. For example, older pupils are prefects, play leaders,

buddies and monitors. In these day-to-day roles they make significant contributions to both the smooth running of the school and to the other pupils' good knowledge and understanding of why it is important to play safely and lead a healthy lifestyle. In the wider communities, pupils raise funds for charities, and musical groups perform at many venues for a variety of audiences.

The vast majority of pupils enjoy school. Attendance is satisfactory and there is a rising trend. Given pupils' very positive attitudes to learning and school, and the good academic progress they make, they are well placed to succeed further.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Typically, teachers manage their classrooms well and there are few disruptions to learning. Good relationships develop between pupils and with staff, and these lead to open dealings which promote good behaviour and a strong enjoyment of learning. Work is matched well to the varying needs of pupils because the tracking of pupils' achievements is strong. Pupils with extra learning needs are mostly supported well, with teaching assistants challenging and guiding at appropriate times. In particular, the bi-lingual assistant makes a significant contribution to the good progress made by pupils who are learning English as an additional language, often through supportive and challenging questioning in the mother-tongue.

Teaching is stronger in Key Stage 2 and pupils make good progress because the pace of lessons and learning is good. There is also better use of resources than in Key Stage 1. For example, in a Year 3 mathematics lesson, the interactive whiteboard was used effectively to help pupils sort out the main features of a number problem. Pupils were provided with well prepared worksheets that matched the screens so that they could work at the problems given using similar methods. Across the school, but particularly in Key Stage 1, insufficient notice is given to providing individual challenges through targets for learning and detailed marking.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The strong curriculum promotes pupils' personal development well. There are specific programmes for personal, social, health and citizenship education and these are backed by specialist contributions. For example, safe practices are promoted by provision for cycling proficiency, challenging contributions from emergency services personnel and visits to 'Crucial Crew'. Academic development is promoted well in Key Stage 2 and satisfactorily in Key Stage 1. In particular, there are more opportunities for pupils to solve problems in mathematics and use their reading skills more widely. However, across the school, there are too few occasions when pupils can use and develop their writing skills in the full range of subjects. The curriculum is modified well to meet the needs of the wide range of pupils with extra learning needs. This is particularly effective in relation to the pupils learning English as an additional language. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of visits, visitors and activities outside lessons. The extended services are well planned and include the provision of specialist coaches to improve sporting skills. The work of other specialists, in music and art, is adding greatly to pupils' skills and to the overall opportunities for learning. For example, a very good music lesson significantly developed pupils' skills and interest.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 2

Pupils and parents tell inspectors that children are well cared for in school. Inspectors agree with their view because it is clear that pupils' welfare is monitored robustly and appropriate actions are introduced when a need is identified. Safeguarding and child protection procedures meet government requirements. Good records are kept of attendance and behaviour and, where necessary, the school intervenes and/or supports. The good relationships with outside agencies mean that specialist support is often sought.

There are good and accurate records kept of pupils' academic achievements. However, the information is not used efficiently to set challenging learning targets for individual pupils.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The headteacher leads the school very well, most particularly in promoting pupils' personal development and well-being. She and her senior colleagues have a strong vision for development and this is leading to an improvement in standards in the EYFS and at the end of Key Stage 2. For example, while the headteacher was on secondment for six months, a deliberate decision was made to appoint an associate headteacher with specific EYFS skills and knowledge. As a result, significant improvements have been made in the EYFS. The leadership has ensured improvements in the way the school monitors pupils' academic achievements. Effective links have been established with parents and the local community and excellent practices are emerging that promote community cohesion. These include courses to educate parents, bi-lingual links with Asian mothers and the introduction of community services, such as baby massage. The school values and uses positively the cultural diversity in the school and its community. The extended services coordinator plans and introduces a range of opportunities effectively and these increase community involvement and promote improvements for the pupils. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are supportive and well informed. However, they rely too heavily on the senior staff for the information that informs their monitoring and evaluation roles.

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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?	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?	2
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	3
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	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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?	1
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	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**

Inspection of St John with St Mark CofE Primary School, Bury, BL9 5EE

My colleagues and I thoroughly enjoyed our inspection visit to your good school recently. We appreciated very much the warm welcome, courtesy and help that you gave us. It is not possible in this short letter to write down everything that we saw, but here are some of the main findings.

What we really liked about your school

- The recent improvements in standards for 7 and 11 year olds.
- The good progress that you make in the EYFS and Key Stage 2.
- The good support for pupils with extra learning needs and the good progress they make.
- The strong moral and social development that leads to good behaviour, very positive attitudes to school and work and strong relationships.
- The good range of activities that enrich your academic and personal development, including the ones before and after school.
- The contribution you all make to a safe and caring ethos in the school, such as the way older pupils help the less confident in the playground and elsewhere.
- The good leadership of your headteacher.

All schools can improve, so I have asked the staff to make sure that pupils in Years 1 and 2 make more progress. Staff are also going to improve the link between your learning targets and their marking, so that you are clear about how well you are doing and what else you need to do to improve further. We are certain that you will want to be very helpful by continuing to work hard, always doing your best and following the guidance from your teachers. Finally, I have asked that there is a clearer picture in the school's improvement plan of pupils' learning targets in each year.