

# St Matthew's CofE Primary School, Bolton

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105205
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bolton
<b>Inspection number</b>	336449
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 April 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Brian Holmes

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	255
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Sarhat Shaheen
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs B Haworth
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 November 2006
<b>School address</b>	Kentford Road Bolton Lancashire BL1 2JL
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 18 lessons and observed nine teachers. They looked at pupils' work and observed their behaviour at play times and lunchtimes. Inspectors held discussions with governors, staff, groups of pupils, and parents and carers. They observed the school's work, and looked at its assessment data, evidence of activities and events, information about the curriculum, and monitoring and evaluation documents. Inspectors analysed 48 questionnaires returned from parents and carers, 110 questionnaires from pupils and 13 questionnaires from staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- current rates of progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 for all groups of pupils
- the strengths in care, guidance and support and provision for pupils' personal development
- the effectiveness of strategies to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence
- the effectiveness of teaching and the curriculum for all groups of pupils
- the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation by all leaders, including governors, in driving improvement.

## Information about the school

St Matthew's Primary is an average-sized primary school close to Bolton town centre. Since the previous inspection, there has been significant change both to the teaching staff and the membership of the governing body. Numbers of pupils on roll have increased and the school is currently undergoing extensive building work to convert from a one-form to a two-form entry primary school. There are strong links with the local church. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than average. A majority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils from White British backgrounds is lower than average. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average, with a broadly average number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The school has gained a number of awards, including the Healthy Schools Award and the Activemark.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

### Main findings

This is a rapidly improving school. In a period of change, senior leaders have maintained a clear vision for improving pupils' progress and standards of personal development and well-being. Senior leaders are well supported by governors, parents and carers and pupils. Parents and carers appreciate the strength of the school's provision for care, guidance and support, which is at the heart of the school's work. The effects of this are seen in strengths in pupils' personal development and well-being and the harmony within the school community. As one pupil commented typically, 'Even though we have different skin colour and different faiths, we are all the same inside.'

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage from starting points well below the levels expected for their age and, by the end of Year 2, attainment is now broadly average. Attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 6 as a result of steady and improving progress in Key Stage 2. In most classes, there are clear indications that pupils' progress is beginning to accelerate. Teaching is satisfactory and improving and assessment is used well to support pupils' learning. In some classes, teachers spend too long explaining tasks, which limits pupils' opportunities to learn independently. The curriculum supports pupils' achievement satisfactorily, with strengths in its effect on pupils' personal development and well-being and in the additional activities the school provides. However, links between subjects and opportunities for pupils to apply their basic skills in all areas of their learning are not embedded in all classes. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and their good behaviour makes a positive contribution to their learning. Attendance has rapidly improved and is average. Pupils have a good understanding of how to live healthily and regularly participate in activities that promote good health. Pupils from different backgrounds get on well with each other and demonstrate good levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. They make a positive contribution to the life of the school and the community through the work of the school council and the 'green team'.

The school has successfully maintained the quality of pupils' education in a period of change. Senior leaders have embedded the school's self-evaluation processes, which are rigorous and accurate. Governors, many of whom are new, are making rapid progress in becoming partners in evaluating the school's performance. As a result, there is a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The rapid improvement in attendance and reduction in persistent absence, the improvements in attainment and the rigorous use of assessment to bring about improvement indicate that the school has a good capacity to sustain its improvement further.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

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- Improve teaching by ensuring that teachers build on pupils' enthusiasm for learning and consistently provide opportunities for them to be involved in their learning.
- Improve the curriculum by strengthening links between subjects and giving pupils more opportunities to use and apply their basic skills in all areas of their learning.
- About 40% of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit from an Ofsted inspector before the next section 5 inspection.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

In the best lessons, pupils are fully engaged and make good progress. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils worked enthusiastically with partners and in small groups to describe the features of a character in a story, while more-able pupils undertook research independently using information and communication technology (ICT). In some lessons, pupils make less progress as they are not given enough opportunities to learn independently. When this occurs, the pace of pupils' learning slows down. Rates of progress are accelerating in most classes. By the end of Year 2, pupils are attaining standards in line with those expected. Evidence from lessons, pupils' work and assessment data shows that, in Key Stage 2, most pupils are making satisfactory progress and pupils in Year 6 are now making good progress. Pupils from different backgrounds make satisfactory progress, similar to that of other pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language are making good progress because of the targeted interventions they receive and good support from teaching assistants.

Pupils are clear that they feel safe and know that they can use the 'worry box' if they have any problems. Their behaviour is welcoming and positive and routinely they show responsibility in responding to expectations. They have a good understanding of healthy living through their engagement in sport and healthy food choices. Pupils respond well to opportunities to contribute to the school and community. Older pupils act as playground leaders and the 'green team' works hard to look after the school environment. They are appropriately prepared for the next stage of their education through their average attendance and satisfactory achievement. Pupils develop good spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, learning about other faiths and celebrating the diversity of faiths and cultures within the school.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory, with examples of good practice. In the best lessons, pupils make good progress because they are fully engaged in learning and are given well-planned opportunities to work with other pupils to share ideas and work on investigations. In a Year 3 science lesson, pupils worked well in groups to predict whether or not petals will change colour as coloured water moves up a flower's stem. Assessment is used well to check pupils' understanding during lessons. In most lessons, planning is used effectively to meet the needs of all pupils and there are satisfactory opportunities to use ICT. Teaching assistants are deployed well to support groups, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those at early stage of learning English as an additional language. In some lessons, teachers do not capitalise on pupils' enthusiasm for learning and keep too rigidly to their plans and not following pupils' interests, and by spending too long explaining tasks. Assessment is used well to support learning. Teachers' marking makes clear to pupils what they have done well and, in most classes, what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils in most classes have a good understanding of their targets and how well they are doing and are able to comment on each other's work.

The curriculum makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. A focus on writing has resulted in improved progress across the school and the phonics programme has led to improvements in speech and language in Key Stage 1. There has also been recent improvement in provision for ICT, but opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in writing and ICT are not consistent in all classes. Staff are making stronger links between subjects, but this is not embedded across the school. There is strength in the school's

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provision for extra-curricular and enrichment activities, which have a positive effect on pupils' personal development. Through the Activemark award, there are a wide range of sports activities with good take-up from pupils and, through the Healthy Schools award, there is an annual healthy living week, which contributes well to pupils' understanding. A wide range of visits are used to enrich pupils' learning experiences, such as to Skipton Castle and Chester Zoo.

Pupils are cared for well. Staff know the pupils well and this results in trusting and friendly relationships, which positively affect pupils' confidence and self-esteem. The support for pupils whose circumstances mean they need additional help is extremely good and contributes to their good progress. There are effective links with outside agencies to promote pupils' well-being and effective monitoring of attendance has contributed positively to the recent reduction in absence.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Senior leaders have a clear focus for improving pupils' attainment and well-being. There are rigorous systems for tracking pupils' performance, which are leading to increased rates of progress. Leadership of teaching and learning is effective and has focused on improving the quality of teaching assistants' work. Senior leaders are now focused on ensuring the consistency of pupils' progress across the school in those classes where learning is satisfactory rather than good. Governors are very supportive of the school and are working hard with senior leaders to develop systems for analysing for themselves information about the school's performance. The school promotes equal opportunities well through its provision for different groups, notably pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. Safeguarding requirements meet current requirements well and are supported through robust documentation. There is good engagement with parents and carers and with partners such as other local schools to support pupils' learning and well-being. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. It is a harmonious community where pupils from different backgrounds get on well and there are good links within the local community. Plans to promote pupils' understanding beyond the school and the immediate locality are developing well.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. The high priority given to children's safety and the secure relationships with adults results in extremely good behaviour and children settling quickly and happily. Children play well together and develop good levels of confidence and self-esteem, as when two children from different backgrounds cooperated to 'push' plastic ducks down a water chute. Children show good levels of independence in choosing activities and share resources well. In instances of child-initiated learning, adults take advantage of unforeseen learning opportunities, as for example when two children did handprints, leading to a discussion about how many fingers there are on each hand.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led with an effective staff team who manage children's learning well. Activities are well planned to meet individual children's needs and assessment is used well to plan next steps in learning. Children make good progress in their language development through the Letters and Sounds programme. At times, teaching is inspirational, as for example when a group of Reception children were 'led in to story land' to 'climb' up Jack's beanstalk. The learning environment is adequately equipped, with further improvement to the outdoor environment identified to provide climbing equipment for physical development for Reception children in line with that already in place for the Nursery. Children make good progress from starting points well below those expected for their age in all aspects of their learning. By the end of Reception their attainment is below average.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

Inspectors' findings agree with the views of the large majority of parents and carers, who expressed positive views about the school. They are very happy with their children's experiences at school, particularly their children's enjoyment of school and the extent to which the school keeps their children safe. Parents and carers typically commented that they are pleased with their children's progress and the quality of support they receive from staff.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Matthew's CofE Primary School, Bolton to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 48 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 255 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	67	16	33	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	77	11	23	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	33	69	14	29	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	65	14	29	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	30	63	17	35	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	58	17	35	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	67	16	33	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	23	48	24	50	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	31	65	16	33	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	56	19	40	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	54	20	42	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	29	60	19	40	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	36	75	11	23	1	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



30 April 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Matthew's C of E Primary School, Bolton, BL1 2JL

Thank you for being so welcoming and friendly when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our time at St Matthew's C of E Primary, particularly talking to you. We know that you like your school and that you are, rightly, proud of it.

We think that St Matthew's C of E Primary is a satisfactory and rapidly improving school with a number of strengths. We were impressed by your behaviour and how well all the pupils get on with each other. You told us that it is a 'multicultural school where [you] all socialise with each other'. You said that you like your teachers, that they look after you and help you to learn by giving you difficult work. You enjoy your lessons and all the activities on offer, like the sports activities and visits to places such as Skipton Castle. You make a good contribution through the work of the school council and the green team. You told us that older pupils play with younger children to help look after them. As a result of everything the school does, the standards you reach are similar to those in most other schools and you make satisfactory progress in your learning. All the things the school does for you are made possible because your headteacher, the other teachers, the governors and all the adults work hard to do their best for you.

We are asking the school to do two things to improve. First, we have asked the teachers to improve the opportunities you are given to learn and work on your own. Second, we have asked the school to improve the curriculum by giving you more opportunities to practise your reading, writing, numeracy and ICT skills in all of your subjects. You can help by continuing to work hard, behaving well and doing your best to help the school improve further.

With very best wishes for the future

Yours sincerely

Mr Brian Holmes

Lead Inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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