

# St Ethelbert's RC Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105222
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bolton
<b>Inspection number</b>	336453
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 July 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jennifer Platt

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

---

<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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	240
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Tom Grady
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Mandy Messham
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 November 2006
<b>School address</b>	Melbourne Road Deane Bolton BL3 5RL
<b>Telephone number</b>	01204 333036
<b>Fax number</b>	01204 333037
<b>Email address</b>	seniorj@st-ethelberts.bolton.sch.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 July 2010
<b>Inspection number</b>	336453

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2010

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons and observed nine teachers. Meetings were held with staff, governors and pupils. Informal discussions were held with parents and carers as they arrived at school with their children. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including policies relating to the safeguarding of pupils, the school's development plan, self-evaluation and pupils' progress records. In addition, inspectors analysed 90 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, 20 from school staff and 104 from pupils.

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

- the progress of the more-able pupils in writing throughout the school and the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in Key Stage 2
- current attainment on entry to school and the progress of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the accuracy of assessment and teachers' use of assessment when planning lessons
- the school's ability to sustain current improvements and ensure good capacity to improve.

## Information about the school

The school is average in size. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The school population is mainly White British, although the number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is increasing. A small number speak English as an additional language. The school holds several awards including the Healthy Schools status, Investors in People and the Activemark. The school has received the local authority's Nurture Award in recognition of the care, guidance and support given to pupils.

**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?**

**2**

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

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good and improving school. It has strengths in the outstanding care provided for pupils and links with other agencies which provide additional expertise and support. Pupils feel safe because they know staff are genuinely concerned about their welfare. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exemplary. The walls are awash with displays showing the school's support for others and many contacts with other schools and countries. The promotion of fairness and harmony is a real strength. The school's motto 'love, care and share' is mirrored in daily life. Parents and carers hold the school in high esteem. 'The ethos of love and care provides an excellent base for children to start their journey through life' is a typical comment. It is not surprising pupils enjoy school and attendance is above average.

Overall achievement is good. Children start school with broadly typical attainment for their age although there are weaker elements in literacy and numeracy. Progress is consistently good and overall attainment is broadly average and rising rapidly. The unvalidated national test results for 2010 are above average and show the school is continuing to improve. Reading has been a consistent strength in the school and currently 76% in Year 6 are working at above average levels. Attainment in writing is improving but is not as high as in other subjects. Pupils' handwriting is not always neat and the more able do not make consistently good progress.

Effective teaching and a good curriculum contribute to the pupils' success. Lessons are well managed and behaviour is good. The focus on collaboration is excellent and is reflected in pupils' confidence to express their ideas. Information and communication technology (ICT) skills are taught well in the suite but resources are limited for pupils to extend these skills in lessons. This is a very busy school. Every day has different events and activities and the enrichment of the curriculum is excellent.

The headteacher is the driving force behind the school's ability to forge ahead. She is determined to provide the very best for the children and is respected by parents and carers whom she greets personally at the start of the day. Other leaders are very supportive, but aspects of monitoring and evaluating change are not fully delegated. Many governors are new but they have already evaluated their role and consulted with parents and carers and pupils. The school is very clear about the way ahead. Self-evaluation is honest and mainly accurate. It links well to the school's development plan which sets out actions to sustain improvements. The school, therefore, has good capacity to improve.

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

**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

- Raise standards in writing, by:
  - insisting on higher standards of handwriting
  - embedding assessment procedures
  - using assessment information to ensure work is set at the correct level especially for the more able pupils.
- Increase the delegation of management roles, by:
  - providing more opportunities for subject leaders to monitor the impact of change.
- Increase resources for information and communication technology to enable pupils to extend their skills in lessons.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Classrooms are busy and learning is active and enjoyable. At the core of learning is pupils' participation and this meets the needs of these pupils very well. They are inquisitive and relish a challenge. For example, in Year 6, groups of pupils set to work with a will preparing ideas for a presentation about friend or foe. They were highly motivated as they knew that a drama presentation was the finale. It is, therefore, not surprising achievement is good. Although overall attainment at the end of Year 6 is not yet securely above average, progress is consistently good. Mathematics, which was a previous weakness, is now a strength. Early indications are that virtually every pupil reached the level expected for their age in Year 6 and 40% exceeded this level. Standards have also been rising at the end of Key Stage 1 and have been above average overall for the last two years. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the few who are learning English as an additional language, are supported effectively with additional guidance from trained staff. Consequently, their achievement and progress are in line with their peers.

Pupils unanimously like their school. Their personal qualities reflect outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The pupils' respectful attitudes and kindness to each other and visitors result in harmonious relationships and a welcoming ethos. Acts of worship are used most effectively to encourage reflection and appreciation of the world. Pupils show wisdom in caring for the environment and supporting others including through raising awareness of Fair Trade. Pupils know what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and take full advantage of the wealth of sports activities provided. They feel safe in school and are adamant that playtimes are free from any harassment. The community police are regular visitors and pupils know the importance of taking care of themselves in potentially dangerous situations. The school council is very active representing others and was instrumental in designing the new playground. The school has raised considerable funds for many charities, especially enabling three children in Africa to attend school. The school raises pupils' aspirations with information about future career prospects and ensures that they are well prepared for the future.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

**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

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
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>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

There is consistently good-quality teaching across the school. Lessons are interesting and usually proceed at a good pace. Resources are varied and readily available so that lessons run smoothly. Drama, and speaking and listening activities play a major role in many lessons. It is clear to see how the school is recognised locally for the high quality of this aspect of teaching. For example, Year 2 pupils very enthusiastically put actions and music to rhymes and performed them with great expression. Classrooms are vibrant learning environments. Teaching assistants are used effectively, often providing good support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. New assessment procedures are becoming embedded, although not as much in writing as in other subjects. Lessons are well prepared, although it is not always clear how tasks are going to be adjusted to meet the needs of different abilities. This leads to some lack of challenge and especially the expectation of the quality of pupils' handwriting is not always high enough. The best examples of marking clearly tell pupils how to improve, but there is limited reference to their targets.

Adjustments to planning have led to a more creative curriculum. Subjects are linked together and make learning more purposeful. In lessons in the ICT suite pupils show great confidence in research and other computer skills. However, the lack of resources in classrooms means that ICT cannot easily be used across the curriculum. Pupils' personal development is of paramount importance to the school and the programme to

<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.

**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

teach personal, health and social education is very well organised. A good balance of activities makes effective use of specialist music teachers and sports coaches. This provision is augmented by an outstanding range of clubs, visitors and visits. During the inspection, Year 3 were going on an adventure outdoor 'den-making' activity, which one pupil told inspectors excitedly was her fifth outing this year.

In this very caring school, staff display a high level of commitment to every child. They are all known as individuals and treated with great respect. Nothing is too much trouble to help pupils overcome some often significant hurdles to their happiness and learning. Additional sessions are organised by the learning mentor to enable pupils to share any personal thoughts or worries. Attendance is well promoted and is above average because pupils feel safe and happy to be in school.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher provides exceptional leadership, raising staff morale during difficult times. As a result, all feel valued and there is a shared sense of purpose to embed changes and drive the school forward. Improved assessment is enabling staff to monitor progress and identify achievement more effectively. Termly progress meetings between the headteacher and staff are making them more accountable for the progress of pupils in their class. Targets are challenging and were exceeded this year. Subject leaders share their skills effectively, although opportunities for them to monitor the impact of change are not yet fully embedded in all subjects. Self-assessment identifies the correct priorities and actions are in place to address any concerns. The success of these can be seen in rising standards, especially in mathematics. Governors play a full part in the drive to improve. They are very well informed because they visit regularly and consult with parents and carers and pupils, by holding workshops and conducting surveys. The minutes of the meetings of the governing body show that issues are challenged, although occasionally, too much information is provided in the headteacher's report which limits opportunities for governors to ask pertinent questions.

The leadership's determination to provide a harmonious community is illustrated by the way in which pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and newcomers are welcomed and fully integrated into school. The focus on the more-able pupils has been most successful in reading and mathematics and plans are afoot to spread this success to writing.

**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

The school promotes community cohesion within the school and beyond the immediate locality well. The increase in pupils from different ethnic backgrounds is embraced as an opportunity to celebrate diversity and pupils respect beliefs and traditions beyond the school's Catholic faith. The school reaches out to the community and by example, reduces local tension. Evaluation of this aspect of the schools' work is at an early stage of development.

Child protection training is thorough and all staff are checked for their suitability to work with children of this age. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements; all appropriate documentation is all in place and risk assessments for the many visits are carried out.

Close links with parents and carers keep them well informed about what is happening in school. Excellent links are forged with other agencies to benefit pupils. The school checks to ensure value for money when external provision is used. The involvement with the Connecting Classroom cluster has extended links with Pakistan, which has included exchange visits by staff to share experiences with pupils. Staff also share their own skills and the school is a leading school in several areas including the teaching of a personal and social development programme.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<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>2</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>1</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

### **Early Years Foundation Stage**

The Early Years Foundation Stage has been adjusted and children are now taught as one unit. This makes better use of facilities, although some resources still need replacing. The outdoor space and the conservatory are used well. This enables children to experience a wide range of activities and also to accept more responsibility for their



**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

choice of activity. Effective teaching enables children to make good progress from skills on entry that overall are in line with age-related expectations, except in aspects of numeracy and writing. The changes to the provision and facilities are leading to a rise in children's attainment, which over the last two years has been above average when children enter Year 1, although writing and the use of number remain weaker areas of their learning.

It is a delight to observe the children's enjoyment in school. They show great confidence eagerly sharing jokes and demonstrating their press-ups. The daily routine is well established and children gain confidence because they know what is expected of them. They have opportunities to sit and share a book with a friend or to be more active outdoors. Role play in the 'hospital' is effectively extended with interaction from adults that enhance children's understanding of the wider world. Learning through activity is well developed. However, it is not always apparent how the focus in teacher-led tasks is extended into other activities.

The unit is managed effectively. Assessment procedures are now informing daily planning, although not as yet being used to plan future priorities. For example, in identifying how progress in writing is to be improved. Parents and carers are pleased with the start their children have to their education. Staff intend to extend the links made with parents and carers, especially in increasing their contributions to the progress their children make.

*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

The vast majority of parent and carers who returned the inspection questionnaires had very positive views of the education provided for their children. They appreciate the care their children receive and inspectors agree that this is excellent. A small number felt that they would like more information about the progress their children make, but most parents and carers feel well informed and inspectors observed the many opportunities available to parents and carers to contact staff. Parents and carers were unanimous in their belief the school is managed effectively and the inspectors agree.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Ethelbert's RC Primary School 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 90 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 240 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	72	77	18	19	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	75	81	16	17	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	54	58	32	34	5	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	55	59	34	37	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	60	65	30	32	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	52	56	38	41	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	52	56	36	39	3	3	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)	63	68	25	27	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	58	62	31	33	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	61	66	26	28	3	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	59	63	30	32	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	64	69	27	29	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	70	75	19	20	2	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.**



15 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Ethelbert's RC Primary School, Bolton, BL3 5RL

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your school. You were very polite and helpful, offering help before we needed to ask you. It was a real pleasure to spend time with you all and it was a delight to hear how proud you are of your school. You go to a good school and some features are outstanding. These include how well your staff care for you and it is good to know you feel safe. Your school is a very happy school because you all care for each other. It is amazing the amount of money you raise for other charities. Well done!

To help your school become even better, I have asked your headteacher and governors to:

- help you all make as much progress as possible in writing
- enable subject leaders to find out more about what is happening in the subjects they lead
- increase ICT facilities so that you can extend your skills in more lessons.

You can help by always trying hard with your writing, including your handwriting. Your staff provide an outstanding number of exciting activities to make your learning interesting. I am sure you will always have some good memories of your time in school.

I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Jennie Platt

Lead Inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**