

St Edward's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105802
Local Authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	336560
Inspection dates	9–10 November 2009
Reporting inspector	John Foster

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	326
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Tracey Street
Headteacher	Mrs Lynne Coxell
Date of previous school inspection	1 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 16 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at curricular plans, monitoring records for teaching and learning, the school's evaluation of its performance and its policies. An analysis of the 120 questionnaires returned from parents and carers was undertaken.

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

- the reasons for the year-by-year differences in the school's national test results
- the school's provision for different groups of pupils
- the effectiveness of teaching across the school
- the provision of outdoor learning for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

The school is much larger than the average primary school. Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage at the age of four in the Reception class. Most pupils are of White British origin, though an increasing number are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with a statement of special educational needs are a little above the national averages. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is also a little above average. The school holds a number of awards. These include a renewal of Investors in People, Learning Platform for Excellence in Information Technology, the Activemark Sports (Gold) and the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) Teaching Award for Sustainable Schools. The school is one of only three schools in the country to hold the coveted Fifth Green Flag award in recognition of its work in sustaining the environment.

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 school where pupils achieve well and make good progress because they are taught effectively. The school is well led by the headteacher, with good support from the deputy headteacher and senior leadership team. Governance is good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Governors are now more keenly aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get a good start to their education because of the good provision in that area. Though variable year-by-year, pupils' attainment in national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 is broadly average and convincing data show that pupils make good progress during their time at the school. The latest unvalidated national data (2009) show that over the past three years Key Stage 2 pupils have made better than average progress than in schools nationally, resulting in an improvement in standards, although standards in writing lag behind those in other subjects. The quality of teaching, though good overall, is variable across the school. An important feature of good lessons is the appropriate pace for pupils to learn well. In some lessons, however, pupils spend too much time sitting on the carpet with teacher-directed work, rather than being actively involved in their own tasks.

The school provides a good curriculum to meet the needs of its pupils. The school's work in supporting ecology is outstanding: the school has won area awards and came close to achieving the national award for schools for its work in protecting the environment, having been beaten in the competition by older pupils from a secondary school. The school provides pupils with excellent opportunities to contribute to the school and wider communities. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They have a strong understanding of moral and social issues and care for each other well.

The school has distinctly improved since the last inspection. Teaching and learning are clearly better and are now good, as is the quality of care. Previous weaknesses have been addressed decisively because senior leaders work effectively together, boosted by improved governance. Accurate self-evaluation is underpins the school's development plans. A good example of the school's success is the outstanding provision for community cohesion, with its strong links locally, nationally and globally. Such positive and fruitful actions demonstrate that the school is in a good position to sustain improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to raise standards by:

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- ensuring that all groups of pupils are given appropriate work to develop their learning
- improving the quality of writing across the school
- ensuring that teachers' marking consistently shows pupils how their work can be improved.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - having senior managers check more rigorously the quality of teaching and learning
 - providing extra support and professional development for those teachers who do not regularly deliver good-quality lessons
 - sharing good practice among staff and providing them with opportunities to observe good practice in other schools.

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

Pupils enjoy learning and are eager to participate in lessons. They told inspectors that this is because their teachers make learning fun. Classrooms, therefore, are positive learning environments. Children start in Reception with skills below those expected for their age, particularly in their language. They are taught well and because of this they make good progress towards achieving the expected learning goals by the time they start in Year 1. The good teaching they receive throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 enables pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to maintain this good progress. As a result, by the end of Year 6, pupils reach standards that are broadly average, though in mathematics standards are slightly above average. The percentage of pupils reaching Level 5 has also increased during this period, except in science, where the percentage is below the national average. The good-quality provision and teaching in information and communication technology (ICT) has resulted in pupils using technology confidently and securely. They access the school's portal and use this well to support their learning.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school and always have an adult in whom they can confide if they have a problem, knowing that it will be dealt with efficiently. As a result of the staff's high expectations, children's behaviour is good overall, and at times exemplary. Pupils know the dangers of drug and tobacco abuse in protecting their health. They know that they should eat healthy food and most pupils eat the healthy food options provided for them at lunchtime. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to be involved in the community and they do so enthusiastically. Within the school community, pupils work hard to support each other and the school and eco councils have a significant impact on the school. For example, members of the school council have given presentations to the governing body about their work and the eco council has visited other schools to talk about what they do. Beyond school, pupils visit local homes for older people, such as when they sing to them at Christmas, and are involved in the local church, where some children represented the school during a presentation

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for the Parochial Church Council.

Pupils are fully involved in the school's work in caring for the environment. They care for the animals in school, sharing these tasks well. The 'playground pals' ensure that all pupils are involved in activities and the older pupils sensitively look after the younger ones. They have a sense of fascination about the world around them and the school's close links with schools in China and South Africa helps to make pupils aware of the cultural differences between their own life and that of people in other parts of the world.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching, though variable, is good overall. While most teachers plan well for pupils' differing needs, this is not consistent across all classes and at times all pupils are given similar work. Where the planning identifies different work, for example in a Year 5 mathematics lesson observed, the appropriate challenge for all pupils allowed them to make good progress in their learning. Support staff are used well to help pupils, and particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to make good progress. While teachers assess pupils' work accurately overall, and are aware of what

¹ 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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pupils need to do to improve, this is not always communicated well enough to pupils. This means that pupils are not always aware of what they should do to improve their work.

A recent review of the curriculum highlighted the need for more links between different subjects and the subsequent introduction of learning through themes has made learning even more enjoyable for pupils. The school has also identified the need to develop a wider range of creative aspects to its curriculum. A highlight of the curriculum is the work undertaken on ecology issues. Pupils are very involved in this area. They are extremely proud of their achievements in reaching the national finals of the DCFS Teaching Award for Sustainable Schools, being the top primary school in the country. The high standards in ICT have come about because of the school's arrangements for ensuring that technology is at the forefront of its work. Pupils are encouraged to use technology to find information and to improve their learning. Visits and visitors form an important part of the school's curriculum. Pupils particularly enjoy their residential visit that very effectively supports the outstanding development of their social skills.

Pupils say that the staff care for them well and this is reflected in pupils' attitudes towards the staff and to each other. A positive learning environment is fostered, with pupils' views being actively sought and acted on, by the headteacher and staff. As one pupil said, 'Our school is like a big family.' The school provides clearly targeted support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, allowing them to make similar progress to other groups of pupils. Arrangements for child protection and safeguarding are fully in place and meet national requirements. Effective arrangements support pupils moving to secondary education because of the close links that exist between St Edward's and the receiving secondary school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, together with the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders, work together well to ensure the school's continuing success and to provide strong leadership and a positive vision for the school's development. All leaders and managers are fully involved in giving pupils the best start to their education possible. They are successful in ensuring that pupils have equal opportunities in their school life. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve as well as other pupils; the comparative performance of more able pupils has improved, except in science. There are no

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consistent disparities in attainment between groups of pupils.

The results of the effective monitoring of the school's performance by senior staff informs clear plans for the school's future development, which identify those improvements needed and how these are to be implemented. Governance is good. Governors are aware of the school's strengths and where improvements are needed. Though they rely to a large extent on the headteacher for information, governors are actively involved in the school's work, having direct links with individual subject managers and making regular visits to the school. The school's safeguarding arrangements are good, with appropriate policies and procedures securely in place.

The school has good partnerships with other establishments to promote effective learning. For example, teachers from the receiving secondary school work alongside the school staff to improve standards in mathematics and science. There are outstanding arrangements for promoting community cohesion. Not only does the school enjoy close links within its local community, such as with the church, there are also well-established links nationally and globally. Through its work on sustainability, the school has established close partnerships with schools in this country and with schools in South Africa and China. Teachers from South Africa visit St Edward's and these visits are reciprocated. The school is well placed to maintain its current good improvement and it gives good value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Starting with

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attainment that is below that expected for children of their age, they are taught well and make good progress in all areas of their learning. This results in many children attaining standards much closer to those expected by the end of their Reception Year. The organisation of work in the Reception classes means that, at times, children spend too long on the carpet with the teacher. However, for most of the day children are given many opportunities to choose their own tasks from a good range of stimulating activities organised by staff. These cover all areas of learning, with particular emphasis on developing children's weaker language skills.

The indoor area is used particularly well to improve learning, but the outdoor area, though large and well equipped, is not arranged well enough to give children total freedom of movement or as wide a choice of activities to be found indoors.

Children are happy and enjoy their learning. All welfare requirements are fully met and staff care extremely well for children. Children mix well with each other and their social skills improve because staff are good role models for them. They play well together, sharing equipment and talking confidently to adults and each other. When one of the inspectors visited the Reception class, for example, he was invited to join the class where the children were playing 'schools'.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is led well and the effective assessment of children's progress enables staff to plan well for learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

Parents and carers have very positive views about the school. Of the 120 questionnaires returned, very few had negative responses. The questionnaires supported inspection judgements fully. For example, when asked whether their children like school, all but one parent agreed that this is the case. They consider teaching to be good and that the school meets their children's needs fully. A majority of parents and carers expressed strong positive agreement to all questions asked.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Edward's Church of England 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 120 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 326 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	87	72	32	26	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	89	74	31	26	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	72	60	42	35	5	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	75	62	41	34	4	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	83	69	35	29	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	71	59	45	37	3	2	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	81	67	37	31	3	2	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)	60	50	49	40	0	0	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	74	61	39	32	5	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	63	52	49	40	3	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	62	51	49	40	2	2	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	81	67	37	31	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	90	74	27	22	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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



11 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Edward's Church of England Primary School, Rochdale, OL11 3AR

Thank you for the welcome you gave the inspection team when we came to inspect your school recently. I would like to thank you for helping us with our work and to tell you what we found out about your school.

You are fortunate to go to such a good school where the staff care for you so well. The teachers work hard to teach you well and this means that you make good progress. Your good behaviour impressed us and this helps with the progress you are making. The work you do in connection with ecology and looking after the planet is excellent. You look after your animals in school extremely well and you are justly proud of how well you did in the national competition for schools. The headteacher and staff make sure that you are aware of what is happening in other parts of the world and how people's lives are different from yours in countries such as South Africa and China.

Your school council and eco council do very good work to make sure that your time at St Edward's School is enjoyable, and you too play your part in supporting them. The ways in which you are involved in the community are excellent.

In order to make your school even better, we have asked your headteacher, the staff and governors to:

- help you to reach even higher standards in your work
- make sure that you are taught well in all your lessons.

You can help them by continuing to work hard and making sure that your behaviour stays as good as it is now.

Yours sincerely

John Foster

Lead inspector

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