



St James' Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 105848
LEA Rochdale
Inspection number 277426
Inspection dates 6 February 2006 to 7 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Marie Cordey CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Crossfield Road
School category	Foundation		Wardle
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Rochdale, Lancashire OL12 9JW
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01706 378268
Number on roll	242	Fax number	01706 371676
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Jareth Sudworth
Date of previous inspection	27 November 2000	Headteacher	Miss Catherine Aden

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 6 February 2006 - 7 February 2006	Inspection number 277426
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

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.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized Church of England primary school. The vast majority of pupils are from a white British background. Attendance is above average and eligibility for free school meals is lower than usual. Attainment on entry is average. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The headteacher has been in post since April 2005.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with the school's view that it provides a satisfactory quality of education with some good features. Inspectors match the school's judgements in every respect. The relatively new headteacher has raised expectations of performance and provided a strong lead both for staff and pupils. Standards are broadly in line with the national average, including the Foundation Stage, which provides a satisfactory education. Pupils are performing as expected because of the satisfactory teaching they receive leading to satisfactory achievement. There is a need for learning in some lessons to be sharper. Personal development and well-being and care, guidance and support are good because of the commitment of the school to developing the pupils' social as well as academic well-being. All members of staff, teaching and non-teaching, work together to help pupils enjoy coming to school. This contributes to the pupils' attendance which is above average and to their positive attitudes. A strong Christian ethos is reflected in the pupils' tolerance and respect for others. The headteacher is committed to involving pupils more in the assessment of their learning and to tracking pupils' progress more rigorously. This has led to an increasing involvement of senior and middle leaders.

Leadership and management at all levels are satisfactory and strengthened by the good leadership and direction of the headteacher. This is instrumental in contributing to a much more positive ethos in the school following a period of staffing instability. Governors are a key part of the school and very supportive of the headteacher. They fulfil their responsibilities satisfactorily. There has been good improvement since the last inspection and good capacity for further improvement. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Sharpen the focus on pupils' progress by further developing the tracking of progress and ensuring that all pupils are aware of how they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- Raise the standard of teaching to the best in order to further improve achievement and standards.
- Continue the headteacher's strategies to strengthen the middle and senior management of the school to drive up standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils enter the school with average standards, although their social and communication skills are slightly lower. They make satisfactory progress throughout the school because of satisfactory teaching and good support for their personal development and care. Pupils make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage and their standards are in line with national expectations.

Results in national tests at the ends of Years 2 and 6 over recent years indicate that achievement has fluctuated and that it is now satisfactory. Standards are broadly in line with the national average by the time pupils' leave the school. Standards of work in the current Year 2 and Year 6 are average and pupils are on course to meet the appropriate targets the school sets for them. Standards and achievement in mathematics and English are improving. A dip in science standards in 2005 was caused by pupil absence. The school's reputation for music is richly deserved and the large majority of pupils are budding musicians. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified early and supported to make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and provision for pupils' well-being are good. Pupils are happy and enthusiastic learners, who enjoy school; their attendance is above average. They have good attitudes to their work and relationships in school are good. This prepares the pupils well for the future. Pupils are enjoying the healthier lifestyles they now lead. In particular, they like the healthy school meals that they say are 'yummy' and the greater concentration on physical exercise. The active school council confirms that their views are listened to and acted upon. Pupils are developing a good sense of responsibility and a commitment to the school and the local community. The 'Buns and Brass' day, when they entertain senior citizens with musical presentations, is very much appreciated. In school, older pupils act as 'Playground Pals' and support younger pupils at lunchtime on the 'family' tables.

Although most pupils behave well there is a small minority who attempt to disrupt learning. This reflects a concern expressed by some parents. Overall, behaviour is satisfactory and is a focus for improvement by the school, linked to making all lessons good. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good as seen in the generous support for charities and the support given to a pupil in Uganda. Pupils have a growing understanding of major faiths and the school uses assemblies well to promote sensitive and thoughtful appreciation of others.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. This reflects the school's view. Relationships between teachers and pupils are caring and the pupils' attitudes are good. Pupils are attentive and work hard in an atmosphere that encourages learning. Teaching is matched closely to pupils' needs and support is placed accurately to ensure that pupils improve. The teachers are enthusiastic and create a desire for knowledge amongst the pupils. However teaching is inconsistent. Where it is good, teachers demand the best from pupils. Pupils work well when there is a variety of activity and their imagination is captured, for example, when a teacher's obvious relish for using

the best words resulted in the pupils using quite sophisticated language. Behaviour is satisfactory and deteriorates only when the pupils are not motivated and involved or when the teacher's planning and classroom management skills are less well developed. Occasionally, the pupils are not given the chance to be actively involved because teachers spend too long introducing their work. When this happens the support staff are less well used. Overall, however, lessons are effectively planned to meet the needs of all the pupils and learning support staff provide effective support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There is a commitment to improvement and the school invests in significant professional staff development. Pupils are not generally aware of how they are doing and what they need to do in order to improve their work. The school is working on this and extending it to include challenging targets so that pupils are very clear about what they are aiming for and how to do it.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with some good features. It has been reviewed to meet the range of learners' needs. Recent spending has improved the quality and quantity of resources and these are used effectively to provide pupils with a wide range of experiences. Interactive whiteboards in every classroom are used effectively to illustrate and enliven discussions. The decision to use laptop computers more flexibly is beginning to have a positive effect on the use of information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum. A strength of the provision is the wide range of well attended enrichment activities, which include music, drama, dance and sports. Of particular note is the wealth of music provision and the large majority of pupils receive instrumental tuition. The links with the high school and local college are valuable in extending the range of activities open to pupils. The personal and social education programme is satisfactory and is due to be improved with new resources. Visits and visitors add to and stimulate pupils' enjoyment of learning. The curriculum facilitates satisfactory progress.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Provision for the care, support and guidance of pupils is good. The staff work hard and effectively to ensure that pupils feel well cared for and secure. Following a health and safety audit, risk assessments are now in place and are regularly reviewed. Thorough arrangements are in place for child protection and all staff understand their role in reporting any concerns. Parents are confident that their children are safe and secure. All pupils are valued equally and the headteacher and staff are zealous in their commitment to make the school a happy, safe and caring place. Induction arrangements and links with other schools are strong. Sensitive support is given to pupils with a physical disability and there is good wheelchair access to the building. The care for pupils who need extra help is diligent; for example, those with medical conditions or disabilities. The monitoring of academic progress has now begun to involve pupils in

the process. The school has identified the need to develop this further by making more effective use of assessment information to track pupils' academic progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management at all levels are satisfactory. The relatively new headteacher is positive about what she wants for the school and has a clear strategy for improving standards. She is increasingly involving the senior management team and middle managers in this work and developing their skills. The headteacher and the school are committed to making St. James' a happy and positive experience for the pupils and this is reflected in good personal development and well-being and good provision for their care, guidance and support. The headteacher has worked well in a relatively short space of time both to improve standards and to look after and celebrate the pupils and staff. Pupils' progress has already begun to improve and staff are more settled after a period of instability.

Parents support the school and respond to school needs. Responses to questionnaires show that they are pleased with the school and commented on the improvements made since the appointment of the new headteacher. A small number are concerned about behaviour around school and inspectors agree that this needs improvement for a small minority of pupils. Clearer analysis of setting challenging targets for the pupils is needed and the headteacher has already begun a more comprehensive tracking system to target improvement and to involve the pupils more in their learning. Accurate self-evaluation is based on monitoring quality and performance and this is reflected in the drive to get all teaching up to the best. The headteacher is a strong role model for staff to follow and they have confidence in her good leadership. Governors are supportive and involved in the work of the school. New governors have enriched the governing body which is now more challenging and able to hold the school to account.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
--	-----------------------	--------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. You were very friendly and looked after us well. You helped us to do our job and we were very grateful to you. We would like to share with you what we thought of your school.

- You really like being at St. James' and your parents and people in the community value the school highly.
- You work hard and enjoy your lessons.
- We think your attitudes are good because of the way you look after each other, work hard in lessons and care about people.
- We think that you act responsibly and your suggestions for improving the food and the school playground have meant that you have more healthy food and that you can exercise more.
- Your headteacher, teachers and non-teaching staff work hard and want to make the school even better.

What we have asked your school to do now.

- We want you to know how well you are doing and what you need to do to get even better.
- We have asked school leaders to get together with Miss Aden to check how you are doing so that they can plan for you to improve even more.
- Make all your lessons better.

We also want the small number of you who don't behave as well as the others to improve and concentrate more in lessons.