

St Margaret's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105815
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	377302
Inspection dates	14–15 March 2012
Lead inspector	Joanne Olsson HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Laura Heslin
Headteacher	Maxine Beresford
Date of previous school inspection	19 January 2011
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Introduction

Inspection team

Joanne Olsson
Clare Henderson

Her Majesty's Inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 12 lessons led by seven teachers. Two of these lessons were joint observations with the headteacher. Inspectors also made several shorter visits to classrooms to observe the teaching of reading. Inspectors observed pupils at play and during lunchtime and heard pupils read. Meetings were held with staff, different groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body, the local authority, and senior leaders and managers. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including arrangements for safeguarding, information about pupils' attainment and progress, and pupils' books. They considered the responses to questionnaires from staff, pupils and 35 parents and carers.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is lower than that found nationally but is increasing year on year. Few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than that found nationally. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above the national average. More pupils move into and out of the school throughout the academic year than in other schools. The school meets the government floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. The school has received Healthy Schools status and the Activemark Award. The school houses a privately run pre-school nursery, which is subject to a separate inspection. The latest report is available on the Ofsted website.

When the school was inspected in January 2011 its overall effectiveness was judged inadequate and it was given a notice to improve. Significant improvement was required in relation to pupils' attainment and achievement. A monitoring inspection took place in September 2011 and found that the school was making satisfactory progress in addressing the areas for improvement.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

- This satisfactory school is improving quickly because of strong leadership and a shared determination to succeed. The 'welcome to our friendly school!' notice that greets visitors captures the strength of this harmonious school where every pupil is known and cared for as an individual. The overall effectiveness of the school is not good because pupils' progress is not consistently good enough to raise attainment levels to the national average. Most parents and carers would recommend this school to others.
- From low starting points pupils make satisfactory progress to reach attainment levels which are below the national average by the end of Year 6. Nevertheless, pupils' attainment is improving quickly because previous underachievement has been successfully tackled and more pupils are making good progress. Pupils' achievement in writing has improved considerably, but their achievement in reading is weaker. Disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs do not always make good progress because the expectations for this group are sometimes too low.
- Teaching over time is satisfactory. Nonetheless, it is improving quickly so that good teaching is the norm rather than the exception. However, some inconsistencies remain between classes and subjects. All teaching is characterised by lively, well-planned lessons which promote pupils' enjoyment of learning.
- Pupils' behaviour has improved over time because the strategies for promoting good behaviour are consistently applied. Pupils' courteous and respectful behaviour makes a positive contribution to their safety and learning. Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying and they have confidence in the school's systems to tackle any incidents of harassment.
- Rapid improvement since the previous inspection is a result of effective leadership. The leadership of teaching and the management of performance are good because monitoring activities are rigorous and lead to precise feedback and appropriate professional development.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' achievement, particularly in reading, so that pupils make consistently good progress and reach national attainment levels by:
 - ensuring reading has an equally high profile as writing across the school and is consistently taught well in all classrooms
 - ensuring pupils have greater opportunities to read for purpose and pleasure across the curriculum
 - accelerating the progress of disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs by raising adults' expectations of what this group can achieve.
- Raise the quality of teaching to match the best in the school by:
 - embedding the successful strategies in place since the previous inspection and eradicating inconsistencies between classes and subjects
 - ensuring all teachers clearly model new learning and use questions more effectively to enable pupils to make greater gains in their learning.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils enjoy their learning. They approach tasks with enthusiasm and are keen to succeed. In a Year 5 information, communication and technology lesson pupils displayed exceptional attitudes to learning as they worked together to produce an animation film. In using the equipment to capture hundreds of shots they showed great skills, confidence and perseverance. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson pupils were absorbed in finding out if their fraction was bigger or smaller than their partner's. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed the competitive nature of the task but played fairly and were willing to support their partner if they were unsure about the calculation. Activities such as these develop pupils' creativity, resilience and a real love of learning.

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers feel their child is making good progress at the school. Inspection evidence shows achievement is improving but is satisfactory over time. Children enter the school with skills and knowledge that are much lower than those expected for their age. They get off to a flying start in the Early Years Foundation Stage but by the time they enter Year 1 what they know and what they can do is still much lower than average. Published data for 2011 show pupils make satisfactory progress from this point to reach attainment levels which are below the national average by the end of Year 6. Nonetheless, pupils' attainment has risen since the previous inspection and in 2011 more pupils reached the average levels in English and mathematics than in previous years. School-based data show attainment across the school is steadily rising. Scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observations confirm this. Consequently, most pupils' attainments, particularly those in Key Stage 2, are much closer to age-related expectations. This is because almost all pupils are making at least satisfactory progress from their starting points

and many pupils are making accelerated progress. Previous underachievement is being firmly eradicated so that pupils are achieving as well as other pupils nationally.

Although the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than average by the end of Years 2 and 6, they are making good progress from their starting points. Consequently, achievement gaps for this group are closing quickly. Disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall, although their attainment is much lower than that of other pupils in the school. These pupils do not always make good progress because the expectations of what they can achieve are sometimes too low. More-able pupils make good progress because the challenge they receive is well matched to their capabilities.

Pupils make strong progress in writing. This is because they have many opportunities to write at length over a range of subjects. Pupils' achievement in mathematics is improving year on year because pupils' basic skills are consistently built on as they move from class to class. Achievement in reading, although improving, is relatively weaker. Pupils' attainment in reading by the end of Key Stage 1 and the by the time they leave Year 6 is lower than the national average and fewer pupils make better than expected progress in this subject. This is because pupils are not always able to read for sustained periods of time either independently or to an adult on a regular enough basis. In some classes pupils are able to read for purpose and pleasure across the curriculum, but this is not consistent across the school. Pupils' communication skills are well developed because they have ample opportunities to work in small groups and to take part in role-play and drama activities.

Quality of teaching

Most parents, carers and pupils say teaching at the school is good. Teaching has improved considerably since the school was previously inspected. Consequently, much is now good and some is exceptional. Although most of the teaching observed during the inspection was of good quality, evidence confirms teaching is satisfactory over time. This is because the improvements to teaching have not had enough time to embed and enable all pupils to make good progress from their starting points. Furthermore, pupils' books and school-based data show some inconsistencies which indicate teaching is not always good on a day-to-day basis in all classes and subjects. Teachers use assessment information well so activities meet the needs of most pupils and they pay due attention to basic skills so gaps in learning are closing. In the most effective lessons teachers offer precise explanations and model new learning well. However, this is not consistent in all classes. Occasionally, teachers' questions do not move pupils' learning on quickly enough.

The teaching of early reading is secure because skills are systematically taught. Recent improvements mean reading has a higher profile in the school and all teachers are striving to develop pupils' comprehension skills as well as their reading fluency. However, inconsistencies between classes mean these strategies are having varied success. Overall, the teaching of reading lacks the secure, systematic approach evident in writing and mathematics. Improved teaching is underpinned by a creative curriculum. An appropriate focus on basic skills is balanced with a broad range of imaginative opportunities. As a result, teachers plan lively lessons which capture pupils' interest and motivate them to learn. For example, Year 2 pupils bubbled with excitement when they found an empty dragon's egg on the playground. Teaching effectively promotes pupils' strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Teachers' marking is thorough and celebrates achievement. Pupils know their targets and school strategies such as the 'ice-cream challenge' mean they are eager to reach their goals.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

'Everyone listens to what you have to say and adults take care of you' is a typical comment from most pupils, who say they feel safe and free from bullying. Pupils say behaviour has improved over time and is mostly good. They know how good behaviour is rewarded and they accept that sanctions for weaker behaviour are applied fairly. They say incidents of bullying have reduced and hardly ever happen. They have confidence in the school's systems to resolve issues. Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying. They can explain why homophobic or racist bullying is wrong because they have a strong moral code which is based on valuing differences. The large majority of parents and carers say behaviour in the school is good and bullying is dealt with effectively. School records show behaviour has improved over time. Good links with outside agencies and a consistent approach to managing behaviour have been successful in improving the behaviour of pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable.

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning which are effectively developed in the Early Years Foundation Stage and built on as they move through the school. In a lesson on ordering numbers Reception children willingly listened to each other, worked in pairs and took turns. Their good behaviour contributed to their successful learning. This example is typical of pupils' behaviour and attitudes in all classrooms. Consequently, pupils behave well in lessons and around the school and treat adults and each other with respect and consideration.

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers say their child feels safe at school. Pupils have a good understanding of how to manage risk and keep themselves safe, whether this means crossing a busy road, not talking to strangers or using personal computers at home. Pupils' increasing enjoyment of learning is reflected in their above-average attendance.

Leadership and management

Senior leaders and managers have been relentless in their drive to secure improvement since the previous inspection. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are a cohesive team who effectively promote a clear vision and high aspirations for the school. They are ably supported by increasingly effective middle leaders who make a significant contribution to school improvement by leading whole-school training, providing individual support and checking on the quality of teaching. School development planning is sharply focused on appropriate priorities and professional development is well matched to individual and whole-school need. The systems to monitor the quality of teaching are of good quality because they are regular and lead to improvements. Teachers' performance is well managed because they receive precise feedback on how to improve their practice and are able to access support and coaching from other staff. The systems to track the achievement of pupils are particularly strong because they identify gaps between groups. This means underachievement is swiftly tackled. This school knows itself well because self-evaluation systems are secure. These strong procedures, coupled with a successful track record since the previous inspection, mean the school has good capacity to improve.

Members of the governing body have increased the levels of challenge they offer senior leaders and managers because they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Positive relationships with parents and carers are fostered through regular

newsletters and information about pupils' learning. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaire agreed that the school keeps them well informed and listens to their concerns and views. The school's safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements. The school's provision for equality of opportunity is strong because achievement gaps are narrowing and there are few incidents of harassment.

The curriculum is good because it meets the needs of most pupils and is effectively promoting pupils' enjoyment of learning. Imaginative topics which link subjects together provide good opportunities for pupils to use their skills across the curriculum and gain a deeper understanding of the areas they are learning. The curriculum is enriched by lively displays and role-play areas in all classrooms which help to bring topics alive. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good because each aspect is interwoven into teaching, curriculum provision and the systems to promote good behaviour. Pupils show respect for different faiths, cultures, sexual orientation and disability because they value individuals. They have a good understanding of diversity in school and further afield. Consequently, they are well prepared to live in modern Britain.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



16 March 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Margaret's Church of England Primary School, Heywood
OL10 3RD**

It was lovely to see how much your school has improved since the previous time it was inspected. We are very sorry we did not manage to visit when you were having your ice-cream party! Thank you for being so friendly and willing to talk to us. You had lots of great things to say and we could see that you are very proud of your school.

We consider St Margaret's to be a satisfactory and improving school. These are the main things we found out during the inspection.

- You are enthusiastic learners and you are keen to work hard and try to do your best. You are very good at working on your own and with other pupils.
- You make satisfactory progress over time although your attainment is still below average by the time you leave Year 6. Your achievement is improving quickly because many of you are making good progress.
- Your attendance is above average and you are punctual to lessons. Well done!
- Your teachers are good at making your learning fun and interesting.
- You know how the school expects you to behave and believe most pupils behave well most of the time. You are polite and respectful, so behaviour in classes and around the school is good on a day-to-day basis and over time.
- You feel safe and think bullying rarely happens. You think adults are very good at sorting out problems in a calm way.

To get even better we have asked the people in charge of your school to make sure all teaching matches the very best in the school. We have also asked them to continue to raise your achievement, particularly in reading, by giving you more opportunities to read alone and with an adult across different subjects. It was a pleasure to meet you. Please accept our very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Joanne Olsson
Her Majesty's Inspector

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