

SS Osmund and Andrew's RC Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134237
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	381644
Inspection dates	11–12 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Katharine Halifax

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	348
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rae Hill
Headteacher	John Thorpe
Date of previous school inspection	29 April 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 19 lessons or parts of lessons taught by 13 different teachers or members of support staff. Further time was spent looking at pupils' records, work books, and information about pupils' progress. Inspectors held meetings with school leaders, members of the governing body, staff, pupils, parents and carers, and other professionals. They looked at the school's review of its work, the current development plan, minutes of the governing body meetings, and documentation to ensure pupils are safe. The responses to 120 parental questionnaires were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Are the initiatives that have contributed to narrowing the gap in the performance of different groups of pupils at Key Stage 1 continuing to have an effect?
- What methods are being used to increase the rate of progress in English at Key Stage 2 particularly in boys' writing, and for the very able?
- How advanced is pupils' appreciation and understanding of diversity and community cohesion?
- How effective is the provision in identifying and providing for pupils who have a gift or talent?
- What is being done to raise attainment in communication, language and literacy in the Early Years Foundation Stage?

Information about the school

This is a larger than average-sized primary school that serves the parish of St Osmund's in the Brightmet area of Bolton. Most pupils are of White British heritage. There are increasing numbers of pupils from a number of different countries who are new to the United Kingdom, who arrive with little or no English. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The school has achieved the Healthy School status and the Activemark.

The school shares the accommodation with Little Ozzie's Community Nursery, and the before- and after-school club. These are inspected separately by Ofsted and were not part of this inspection.

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. It has a number of outstanding features. In addition to giving pupils a good education, it provides well for their personal development. This is a school where every pupil and every member of staff is valued. Outstanding links with parents and carers enable them to play an active role in their children's education. As the result of outstanding care, guidance and support, pupils have a good understanding of keeping safe, and an excellent knowledge of healthy living. The care provided for the most vulnerable is exemplary.

Attainment on entry to the school varies considerably year by year but is overall, below that typical of young children. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, so that by the end of their year in the Reception class many are working within the early learning goals. The good progress continues throughout school, and by the end of Year 6, attainment is broadly average. While attainment varies year-on-year because of the composition of each year group, the percentage of pupils making two levels progress in English and mathematics in their time in Key Stage 2 is above the national figure. Equally, a greater proportion of pupils attain the higher Level 5. Pupils make greater progress in reading and writing than they do in mathematics. There are strengths in pupils' performance in sport and music with the signing choir having achieved regional recognition. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) is above that of pupils of the same age. Staff have worked hard to improve attendance and have been successful in halving the rate of persistent absenteeism. Attendance is broadly average and that of the majority is exemplary. However, despite the systems in place, the poor attendance of a handful of pupils affects their attainment.

Pupils make good progress because of good teaching and an imaginative curriculum. Innovations such as 'Shakespeare for writing' have gained national recognition and have a tremendous impact on attainment in writing, particularly that of boys. In addition, it has enabled pupils to have the honour of being invited to be part of the 2012 cultural Olympiad. Teaching has many strengths but on occasion, it is less effective. This is because of inconsistencies in lesson planning and in the use of support staff in mathematics. Furthermore, pupils are not always given sufficient guidance on how to improve their level of attainment in mathematics.

Leaders know the school in detail. Their enthusiasm and wealth of knowledge are appreciated by staff. The rigorous monitoring of classroom practice is improving

pupils' progress. Considerable information has been collected recording pupils' achievements and tracking their progress. Leaders know the priorities that will lift achievement and have reversed a downward trend in attainment in writing. Self-evaluation is generally accurate. Effective communication systems within school ensure all staff keep abreast of educational developments and feel valued and part of a team. The clear vision for the school shared by staff, the good progress, and the strengths in teaching and the curriculum give the school a good capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment further by:
 - ensuring that all teachers make effective use of assessment information to set work that meets the needs of all pupils
 - ensuring all lesson plans focus on the knowledge and skills pupils will acquire during group and individual tasks
 - ensuring pupils fully understand what they need to do to attain the next National Curriculum level
 - reducing the persistent absence of the few pupils who miss school.
- Accelerate pupils' progress in mathematics by:
 - increasing the time pupils spend investigating, researching, discussing and solving problems
 - increasing the contribution that teaching assistants make to lessons
 - ensuring marking is meaningful.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils relish their time in school, saying it is 'somewhere very special'. They achieve well, are confident learners and eager to demonstrate the knowledge they have acquired. This was evident in a Year 6 lesson when pupils' enthusiasm was tangible as they extended their use of connectives and descriptive vocabulary. Pupils take pride in all they do, and have a mature understanding of the consequence of their actions. The behaviour of the majority is impeccable. However, in lessons where teaching is less effective some pupils lose concentration and have a less positive attitude to their work. This limits their learning. Pupils understand their individual targets to improve in reading, writing, and mathematics but some are unsure about what is needed for them to attain the next National Curriculum level.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. While there have been differences in the attainment of particular groups of pupils and between subjects in the past, these are being eradicated through good teaching and additional group or individual work as appropriate, especially for pupils who learn more slowly or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This is particularly so in writing, where staff training, drama, work on phonics, the introduction of a spelling programme and the expectation that pupils will improve their literacy in all subjects, is raising attainment. Providing intensive support at Key Stage 1 is paying dividends in the proportion of pupils achieving the levels expected for their age, and in ensuring that more-able pupils attain the higher Level 3, and

achieve equally well in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in writing is now almost on a par with that in reading. The progress of the current Year 6 is very good in writing with 29 of the 48 pupils already having made the expected two National Curriculum levels progress with still a year to go. While attainment in mathematics is broadly average, pupils do not make the same progress as in English. They have a good understanding of calculation, and of shape, space and measures, but lack confidence in using and applying their mathematical knowledge to solve problems. Pupils who have a gift or talent are helped to excel through activities in and out of school in, for example, areas as diverse as playing the clarinet and wrestling.

Through daily routines, clubs and the curriculum, pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is strong. They raise a considerable amount of money for the school, church and local community, working with pupils in a nearby special school leading sporting activities and directing drama. Pupils have a growing understanding of cultural diversity and show respect for the beliefs of their classmates which may differ from their own. Through support for people in Tanzania, they appreciate their home and school, commenting that 'we are lucky to have all this'. Pupils arriving from abroad say how the 'circle of friends' has helped them to settle quickly and in improving their English. In addition to functional numeracy and literacy, achievement in ICT and skills acquired through sport, such as playing by the rules and working as a member of a team, prepare pupils well for the future. Pupils have an excellent understanding of keeping healthy. They confidently explain healthy eating and the need to be active. Over 150 pupils take part in school sports clubs each week.

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	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have a good command of most of the subjects they teach and are skilled at engaging pupils in learning. They plan their lessons conscientiously with clear learning objectives that are checked at the end of each lesson. Questions and activities ensure those who learn more slowly are able to be fully included in

¹The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

learning. In the best lessons, there is a sense of urgency and questions are designed to make pupils think and reason. This was clearly evident in a Year 5/6 literacy lesson where pupils considered Aesop's Fables and reflected on the moral implications, as well as understanding the features of fables and the use of metaphorical phrases. Where teaching is less effective, prior assessment data is not always used effectively and tasks are not always matched to pupils' abilities. As a result, pupils lose concentration. Furthermore, plans for group work tend to be the task or activity to be undertaken rather than the knowledge and skills to be acquired. Skilled support assistants contribute considerably to pupils' learning in individual and group work in reading and writing, but this is not always the case in mathematics, particularly as some assistants lack confidence in this subject. Good systems are in place to keep a check on pupils' progress. Marking provides useful guidance for the next steps in learning in literacy but it is not of the same quality in mathematics. Displays in classrooms and corridors provide literacy-rich learning environments, but this is not a feature of mathematics and very few classrooms have mathematical investigations for pupils to explore in their free time.

The curriculum ensures that each pupil receives a personalised programme matched to their need, giving additional support as and when it is needed. The focus on the key subjects of English and mathematics is evidenced in pupils' attainment. The recent change to a topic-based approach has been successful in gaining pupils' enthusiasm for history and geography. After recognising that science was not receiving adequate coverage, staff responded so that once again it is taught as a separate subject. A wealth of clubs, visits, visitors and residential experiences enrich the curriculum and make learning meaningful. The school is a lead school for pupils who have a gift or talent, providing numerous experiences, including a summer school and work with artists.

Care, guidance and support are of the highest quality. A well-established team ensure this is maintained. Very effective links with a range of health professionals and agencies support pupils and families, particularly those who are experiencing challenging circumstances. Pupils who are new to the country receive equally good support and say they soon feel at home and are helped to understand not just a new language, but the traditions of the British culture. Pupils are successfully helped to overcome barriers to learning, making comments such as 'they help you to become independent learners' and 'they comfort you if you are upset'.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders have successfully created a school where everyone is valued. The complementary skills of the headteacher and deputy headteacher ensure all elements of management are promoted. The rigorous tracking of pupils' achievements enables

leaders to identify gaps in learning and check progress. Termly pupil-progress meetings with class teachers promote a culture of accountability and result in productive discussions. Each subject leader contributes to the school development plan, although leaders recognise the plan needs to be tweaked, particularly in respect of the targets and success criteria for raising attainment. Through the provision of good professional training, leaders have raised the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. In addition, every adult manages some aspect of school life. Furthermore, leaders have successfully changed the aspirations of parents and carers. For example, mothers who initially were part of the 'mum's army' volunteers have been helped to gain qualifications in education and child care and set out on a career path.

Governance is good. The governing body provides practical support, as well as holding the school to account. At the time of the inspection, good policies and procedures were in place to ensure all adults have an in-depth understanding of safeguarding pupils. The school's promotion of community cohesion is good. The school is a harmonious, outward looking community and widens pupils' awareness of cultural diversity. Leaders work hard to promote equality of opportunity and celebrate diversity. The style of teaching is wide-ranging and brings out individual pupils' strengths. Leaders have successfully remedied disparities in attainment between different groups and are successfully closing the gaps between subjects.

These are the grades for the 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	1
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress and achieve well because of the good provision. As a result of the caring, nurturing environment, children make particularly good gains in their personal development. They enjoy their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage, forming good relationships and playing well together. They especially enjoy their activities, chuckling with glee as they played musical instruments, or proudly displaying a bracelet and water pistol they had created using junk materials. Teaching is good and, while a range of strategies is used to promote children's communication, language and literacy, and calculation, they do not attain as well in these areas as in other aspects of their learning. In order to promote literacy, adults are working with parents and carers providing activities to be used at home.

Although early in the school year, 'Learning Journals' contain good examples of photographs of children using the materials with their parents and carers. Leadership is good. All the required policies are in place and children's welfare is paramount.

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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Almost one third of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Almost all were very positive. Over one third of those responding took the time to write comments. Parents and carers are especially pleased with:

- the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the range of clubs available to pupils
- the school's sporting achievements
- the approachability of staff and their caring manner
- the Catholic ethos.

Inspection findings endorse the views of parents and carers. Two parents expressed individual concerns. These were discussed with the school and one is already being followed up. Regarding the second concern, related to the quality of school meals, on the days of the inspection, the meals were balanced and nutritious.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Osmund and Andrew'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 120 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 380 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	88	73	30	25	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	97	81	21	18	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	78	65	38	32	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	78	65	39	33	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	87	73	30	25	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	80	67	37	31	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	77	64	38	32	2	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)	59	49	53	44	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	81	68	35	29	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	72	60	40	33	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	70	58	45	38	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	96	80	21	18	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	92	77	24	20	0	0	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 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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 and 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.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



13 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Osmund and Andrew's RC Primary School, Bolton, BL2 6NW

Firstly may I say what a delightful time my colleagues and I had when we inspected your school. Thank you for talking with us and for showing us your work. We especially enjoyed hearing all about your visits and your achievements. We are impressed by your drama, and felt very moved listening to the choir perform. It was very clear from our chats and the questionnaire replies we received from you and your parents and carers that you enjoy school, and think that you are safe and cared for well.

Your school provides you with a good education. Good teaching allows you to make good progress. You receive outstanding care and support, especially those of you who have problems in your lives or who have special educational needs. This helps you to have an excellent understanding of keeping healthy. As well as working hard, you have a very positive attitude to everything the school offers. You enjoy lessons, clubs (especially the sports, chess and film clubs), and visits out of school. You are well behaved. All this is happening because you have good leaders.

There are some areas that we have asked your school to consider to make the school even better:

- to work with you to lift your attainment to above average
- to improve your progress in mathematics to match that of writing, in which you have all progressed in leaps and bounds.

We know you will do all you can to help your teachers and wish you every success in your future, especially in the 2012 cultural Olympiad.

Yours sincerely,

Katharine Halifax
Lead Inspector

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