

# Bilsborrow John Cross Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119519
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	379826
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 January 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Naomi Taylor

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	33
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ian Brayshaw
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sandi Lane-Dixon
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 June 2009
<b>School address</b>	Garstang Road Bilsborrow Preston PR3 0RE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01995 640505
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## Introduction

Inspection team

Naomi Taylor

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days notice. The inspector observed two teachers and visited seven lessons. Discussions were held with school staff, groups of pupils, representatives of the local authority, the Chair of the Governing Body and parents and carers. The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation provided by the school, including safeguarding documents, the school's self evaluation and development plans, local authority evaluations, records of pupils' attainment and progress and pupils' work. The responses from 24 parents and carers, 15 pupils and six staff were also analysed.

## Information about the school

This is a much smaller than the average-sized primary school. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities is below the national average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well-below the national average.

There has been a considerable amount of instability in staffing since the last inspection. An associate headteacher was appointed in July 2011 due to the absence of the headteacher. Since that time she has worked two days a week at this school and had been supporting the school for almost a year prior to her appointment.

Pupils are taught in two mixed-age classes. One class contains children in their Reception Year and pupils in Years 1 and 2. The other class, which is taught by two contracted supply teachers to cover the absence of the headteacher and the part-time member of staff on leave of absence, comprises Years 3, 4, 5, and 6.

The school has Healthy School status. It has met the government floor standards, which set minimum expectations for attainment and progress, for the last three years.

**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

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school. Pupils, parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school and acknowledge the improvements in recent months in behaviour, teaching and general communication.
- Pupils’ achieve satisfactorily. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is above average overall. Turbulence in staffing over recent years has had a negative impact on Key Stage 2 national test results, however, these are improving securely and are broadly in line with national expectations.
- Teaching is satisfactory and improving. There were some good lessons taught by the class teachers in both classes. The school provides satisfactory support for pupils with special educational needs and for those with disabilities. As a result, these pupils make satisfactory progress. The associate headteacher and the local authority have been working with the school to improve teaching and learning and this is having a positive impact on improving the current progress of pupils.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. This is partly as a result of the new behaviour policy. Staff, parents, carers and pupils are pleased with the improvements and a more consistent approach means that any poor behaviour is dealt with quickly and more effectively than in the past. Pupils say they feel safe in school and they can turn to any adults if they have concerns. There is a strong emphasis on pupils’ personal development which gives them confidence to move to the next stage in their education.
- The associate headteacher and staff know the school’s strengths and weaknesses. Performance management has been used well to improve the quality of teaching. Some teaching is provided by teaching assistants, some of whom have not had recent professional development in supporting pupils’ different learning styles. The governing body has had to deal with instability in staffing, but with the support of the local authority the appointment of the associate headteacher has brought about some necessary changes. Skills vary

across leaders and managers, including the governing body, who are engaged in monitoring pupils' performance.

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 the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 and learning to raise attainment by the end of Year 6 by ensuring that:
  - the tracking of pupils' progress is consistently and precisely used to plan lessons to meet individual needs, particularly the more-able
  - there is consistency in marking and assessing pupils' work
  - more opportunities are provided for pupils to reflect on their work through self and peer assessment
  - all staff, including teaching assistants, have regular opportunities to engage in professional development.
  
- Further develop leadership and management skills at all levels, including the governing body, to enable school leaders and governors to accurately measure the impact of new initiatives on the progress of pupils and hence drive whole school improvement more rapidly.

## **Main Report**

### **Achievement of pupils**

Children start school with skills and knowledge that are generally in line with those expected for their age or sometimes lower. However, the very small numbers in cohorts mean that this varies considerably from year to year. Throughout their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the Key Stage 1 class, children achieve well due to stability in staffing and improvements in teaching and learning since the last inspection. Evidence from lesson observations demonstrates all pupils are fully engaged in learning and making at least satisfactory and some better progress.

In 2011, the progress of pupils from Key Stage 1 to 2 was below expectations but this was directly linked to turbulence in staffing. Overall attainment at the end of Year 6 was broadly average, but attainment in mathematics was lower than that in English. The associate headteacher has quickly addressed this issue by undertaking assessments of all pupils in the autumn term of 2011 and then adapting the mathematics curriculum so that gaps in pupils' knowledge are being eradicated through teaching by ability rather than by age groups. The positive impact has been immediate with pupils gaining in confidence as they see their numeracy skills develop rapidly. More-able pupils are now being provided with sufficient challenge in mathematics lessons and the less-able now have bespoke support.

Pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities gain much in their development from working in a small school setting. In line with other pupils their

achievement is satisfactory. Parents and carers believe that following the recent changes their children are now making good progress and there was some evidence of this during the inspection.

The younger pupils quickly develop good reading skills. They are able to use their skills to break down and sound out difficult or unfamiliar words. They are then able to demonstrate an understanding of what they had read by retelling the story in their own words. Analysis of data shows that attainment in reading is improving. Reading books are correctly matched to the needs of the pupils. Attainment in reading is above average by the end of Key Stage 1. In Years 3 and 4 pupils have a good understanding of the importance of reading both for their school work and for their future. They are confident in their reading skills and speak excitedly about enjoying reading a variety of books. Attainment in reading is broadly average by the time pupils leave the school.

Pupils' attainment in writing is not as strong as in reading and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1, but the gap is closing as writing is currently a focus across the school. Reception children are encouraged to practise their writing skills and this was evident during the inspection when a teaching assistant very effectively encouraged children to use their fingers to draw in wet sand to practice letter recognition and writing letters.

### **Quality of teaching**

The quality of teaching is satisfactory and improving. The good lessons seen during the inspection had a variety of activities to engage and enthuse pupils and time was used effectively. For example, in Key Stage 1, pupils learnt about developing their literacy skills through a project on pirates. With the teacher, they pretended to be pirates and explored outdoors, in search of hidden treasure. Good questioning techniques by the teacher helped to extend pupils' vocabulary and encouraged them to use their imagination. Pupils were very excited and enthralled and when they returned to the classroom they had a raft of language and experience to draw upon as they embarked on writing their pirate story. They were also developing an understanding of knowing right from wrong and how this impacts on people's feelings.

As reflected in parents and carers questionnaires, the quality of teaching has fluctuated in Key Stage 2 because of the instability in staffing. There have, however, been recent improvements and this was reflected in the lessons seen by the inspector. In a Class 2 mathematics lesson, which includes more-able Year 2 pupils, a variety of tasks were designed to meet well the wide range of abilities. Pupils worked effectively as a group, individually and then with 'talk partners'. Literacy was weaved into the lesson and the number sentences were put into the context of real life.

In the weaker lessons seen the pace of activities did not match each pupils' needs so precisely. For example, a phonics session led by a teaching assistant saw some pupils grasping concepts of letter patterns and the sounds they represent far more quickly than others, but there was not enough challenge for more-able pupils and their concentration lapsed. The new tracking system to monitor progress is now allowing teachers to plan more accurately to meet the needs of individuals but some teaching

assistants have not had the training required to help them adapt their teaching to best meet the learning needs of more-able pupils. Parents and carers rightly believe that following recent changes, their children are now being taught well.

The pupils' work is marked frequently and regularly. Teachers' marking provides pupils with clear information about the next steps to improve their work. With the new tracking system teachers now set realistic and challenging targets. Most pupils now know and understand their targets. This good practice is becoming embedded across the whole school. However, some aspects are not so well established in all lessons, for example, the use of peer assessment by the older pupils which would give them the opportunity to reflect on their work.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Behaviour and safety is good. Pupils have a good understanding of the risks to which they may be exposed, both within and beyond school. Attendance is well-above the national average and pupils arrive punctually to school. Pupils very largely behave well, however, when the pace of learning in lessons did not match the ability of pupils some occasionally became restless, although they responded quickly to teachers' direction. There is no evidence of bullying and parents, carers and pupils express confidence in the schools' new systems for dealing with such occurrences, were they to arise. The curriculum includes raising pupils' awareness of different types of bullying. The school ensures pupils and parents and carers have a good understanding of e-safety both at school and at home.

The improvement in behaviour of pupils is reflected in the fact that there have been no exclusions since the last inspection. The school increasingly improves attitudes of pupils to develop respect for each other and for adults around them.

### **Leadership and management**

The associate headteacher, governing body and leaders and managers at all levels have focussed successfully on identifying the school's strengths and areas for development. Consequently, there have been significant improvements in the progress of pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. Due to instability in staffing, this is not the case in Key Stage 2, but recent changes are already ensuring improvements in learning in this key stage. These, coupled with improvements in attendance and pupils' behaviour, demonstrate satisfactory capacity to improve further.

The school now has an accurate view of the quality of teaching and knows what needs to be improved. There has been sound professional development provided by the local authority and by another school that is helping to improve teaching. There is inconsistency across the school in providing effective marking and feedback to pupils on their progress. The older pupils do not always have time to reflect on their learning through peer- and self-assessment.

The governing body has made significant changes, for example, in appointing the associate headteacher who has instigated effective changes to drive whole-school

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improvements. Safeguarding procedures are satisfactory and ensure that the school is a safe place for everyone.

The new behaviour policy has made an immediate improvement to the attitudes of pupils towards their learning and generally in and around the school. The associate headteacher has also implemented a new tracking system to monitor and evaluate the learning of pupils and this has already led to improvements in teaching and learning in both classes. Teachers are now adapting learning to meet individual pupil's needs and to instigate personalised support for pupils who are not making expected progress. There are some leaders and managers who have yet to fully develop skills in measuring the impact of new initiatives on driving whole-school improvement.

The impact of the curriculum on pupils' outcomes is satisfactory. The curriculum is being carefully adapted to enable pupils to maximise their progress, thereby promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination. For example, the associate headteacher instigated mathematics being taught in ability groups, rather than year groups and already there is evidence of less-able pupils gaining in confidence and the more-able being stretched and challenged. Within the curriculum, the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. There are opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of other cultures, as seen with the project and display on Guatemala. Pupils talk knowledgably about their responsibility to raise money for national and overseas charities for those less fortunate than themselves. They are engaged with their local community a range of events held at the church and in school. They have a good understanding of right from wrong and show respect to their peers, staff, visitors and to the elderly within the community.

## 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](http://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.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
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.**



9 January 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Bilsborrow John Cross Church of England Primary School,  
Preston – PR3 ORE**

Thank you for the warm welcome when I came to inspect your school recently. A particular thank you to those of you who gave your time to talk to me about how much you enjoy your work and the activities you take part in outside lessons. Some of you who read to me demonstrated how you work out unfamiliar words and told me why reading skills are so important.

You attend a satisfactory and improving school where the staff do all they can to encourage and support you. There have been considerable disruptions to Key Stage 2 pupils because of staff absences. There have, however, been a number of changes introduced which are enabling pupils to make satisfactory and in some cases better progress. The teaching you receive is satisfactory and improving. Your behaviour is good in lessons and around the school and the school ensures that you have a very safe environment. You are good at looking after each other and this helps the younger children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to settle quickly into school.

I have asked that the school continues to improve the quality of teaching in lessons, providing opportunities to meet the needs of all ability groups. I have also asked that marking and assessments by all staff is consistent and that they increase the opportunities for you to reflect on your work through peer and self-assessment. Leaders and managers, including the governing body, will monitor the recent changes and ensure that the recent positive changes and improvements in progress are maintained. This will help raise attainment further and help you to achieve even better.

Yours sincerely

Naomi Taylor  
Lead inspector

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