

# Ribbleton Avenue Methodist Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119354
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	358537
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 February 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Eileen Mulgrew HMI

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 controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	168
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rev Peter Sheasby
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jill Alexander-Steele
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 January 2010
<b>School address</b>	Emerson Road Preston Lancashire PR1 5SN
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Thirteen lessons and one part lesson led by eight teachers were observed. Two learning walks were undertaken to focus on the quality of provision for more-able pupils and the intervention programmes for pupils identified as needing extra support. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, senior leaders and managers, and two local authority officers. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including arrangements for safeguarding, information about pupils' attainment and progress, the school improvement plans and pupils' books. They considered the responses to questionnaires from staff, pupils and 64 parents and carers.

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

- Whether the systems for promoting good attendance, punctuality and monitoring absence are rigorously applied to secure a rise in attendance.
- An evaluation of pupils' attainment in English and mathematics to ascertain whether rates of pupils' progress are securely accelerating throughout the year and from one class to the next.
- Whether the quality of teaching and learning and the use of assessment are securely matching tasks to pupils' needs including challenge for the more-able pupils.
- Whether pupils are enabled to apply their basic skills across all areas of the curriculum.
- The extent to which leaders and managers at all levels have driven improvement with sufficient pace.

## Information about the school

Ribbleton Junior School is slightly below average in size. The pupils' heritage includes 40% from White British, 30% from Pakistani and 15% from Indian. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is double the national average. Very few pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs is twice that of the national average. A breakfast club on the school site is managed by the school. The school has achieved Healthy School status.

At the last inspection, in January 2010, the school was issued with a notice to improve. A monitoring visit in September 2010 stated that the school was making satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement. Over the last two years the school has experienced some turbulence in staffing and leadership.

**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?****3****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****3**

## Main findings

Ribbleton Avenue Methodist Junior School is satisfactory. It has several good features. 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. Staff know pupils well and are committed to improving academic achievement and the personal well-being of each pupil. Through improved care, guidance and support, adults have successfully created an ethos in which pupils feel valued. Consequently, behaviour is now good and pupils say they feel safe. These improvements have led to improved levels of attendance and a satisfactory level of achievement.

Central to this improvement is the headteacher and deputy headteacher's relentless focus on raising the quality of teaching and learning. There is no inadequate teaching. Professional development activities aimed at improving teachers' practice have been undertaken. However, as staff left and joined the school, the long-term success of this work was limited. From September 2010, the more stable staffing profile has led to a supportive team approach and improved practice is evident in the classroom. As a result, the satisfactory profile of teaching and learning is on the rise. In good or better lessons, teachers plan activities which challenge all groups of pupils sufficiently. They use opportunities, including skilful questioning techniques, throughout the lesson to check pupils' understanding and adapt the activity appropriately. As such, all learning time is effectively used and pupils make rapid progress. However, this practice is uneven across the school. Marking of pupils' work is regular. Teachers' comments affirm pupils' efforts and identify the next step pupils need to take to improve their work. However, pupils are seldom given an opportunity to reflect on these comments and subsequent marking rarely checks that the pupil has responded to the guidance.

The curriculum is effectively planned to meet the needs and interests of pupils. There are a few examples of links being made between different subjects and pupils are given opportunities to practise basic skills, such as writing in history or science. Visits and visitors are starting to be used to enliven learning during topic work. Theme weeks give pupils a valuable insight into different cultures, but do not provide an opportunity to extend and deepen this learning. Nevertheless, the school is reviewing the curriculum to make it more relevant and interesting for its pupils.

Morale has improved and higher expectations have been established. Senior leaders, including the governing body, have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Rigorous monitoring activities and management of professional development have led to the correct identification of improvement priorities. The school has started the process of creating a school improvement plan which will move the school on. Together with the record of recent improvements in achievement and pupils' personal well-being, the school has satisfactory capacity to improve.

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Up to 40% of the 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?

- Provide a curriculum that meets the needs and aspirations of all pupils by:
  - ensuring planning builds systematically on pupils learning
  - improving cross-curricular provision to include English, mathematics and information and communication technology
  - extending the variety of enrichment activities to add diversity and interest to the curriculum and broaden pupils' experiences, nationally and internationally.
- Build on recent improvements so that achievement is consistently good for all groups of pupils.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
  - ensuring all lessons include planned activities which challenge all pupils sufficiently
  - ensuring teachers use opportunities to check pupils' progress throughout the lesson and adapt work
  - ensuring pupils have opportunity to respond to teachers' comments on their work and teachers check that guidance for improvement has been followed through into subsequent pieces of work.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

The intense enthusiasm, perseverance and enjoyment of Year 5 pupils as they learned about measuring angles reflected the quality of learning in the school at its best. Throughout the school, pupils enjoy their learning. Improvements in the standard of behaviour have led to pupils feeling safe and happy to be in school.

Although variable, pupils join the school with generally average attainment in English and mathematics. For several years, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 was broadly average. Attainment and progress dropped in 2009. Action taken by the school to improve teaching and learning had limited success due to the turbulence in staffing and leadership. Nevertheless, while remaining below average, results in 2010 improved at the expected level in English and significantly so in mathematics. There were no differences in the achievement of any groups of pupils. However, since September, pupils' academic achievement has improved and is satisfactory. It is stronger in reading and mathematics than in writing. Work in lessons, in books and the school's own information on pupils' progress show that pupils are making satisfactory and some good progress. Pupils identified as potentially vulnerable and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified swiftly through the school's tracking system and high-quality intervention programmes are implemented to support their learning. Several pupils commented on how such support had improved their attitude to learning.

Pupils' attendance and punctuality have improved and are average. Pupils have responded well to the school's rigorous monitoring of attendance and enjoy receiving stickers and charts which reflect their improved efforts. Elected members of the school council take

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their responsibilities seriously. Recently, they have taken the first step to become a 'Fair Trade' school. Pupils' spiritual understanding is excellent. Assemblies interest and engage pupils; the main themes are followed up in class assemblies and pupils produce good quality art work to represent the story or the moral. This is tastefully displayed for pupils to refer to during the week. Pupils know right from wrong and get on well together. However, pupils' understanding of other cultures is limited.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

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

## How effective is the provision?

Care, guidance and support of pupils are strengths of the school. The arrangements to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are strong. Pupils referred enthusiastically to the rainbow room and the flower room where they have received support for their work or behaviour and understand the benefits. Staff know pupils and their families well and arrangements for joining the school and transferring to high school enable pupils to feel happy about the moves. Rigorous systems for checking on pupils' attendance include partnerships with parents, carers and external agencies. One pupil spoke proudly of her improved attendance due to the efforts of the school to support her and her family. The breakfast club enables pupils to socialise and encourages punctuality.

Positive relationships and high expectations of learning and behaviour are characteristic across the school. Typical features include enthusiasm; well-planned lessons; teachers' good subject knowledge; and the use of information and communication technology to

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engage and motivate pupils' interest and enjoyment. The use of assessment information has improved and means work is generally pitched at the right level for different pupils. Skilful teaching assistants are used well to support individuals and groups to enable all pupils to access learning. However, where lessons are good, the better features include precise, confident teaching which uses all available time for learning. Similarly, the most effective lessons use assessment information to plan lessons which challenge each pupil and check effectively on pupils' progress and intervene to support or challenge learning.

Pupils' work is attractively displayed throughout the school and reflects the variety of subjects the curriculum offers. Pupils remarked on the increased investigative work in science and how much they enjoy this aspect of the curriculum. Themed weeks are organised to enable subjects to be linked together; for example, cultural week which included Bollywood dancing and African drumming. Visits and visitors are increasingly being used to enhance subjects. A variety of activities is provided at lunchtime and after school, although some pupils commented that they would like more clubs. However, the school is reviewing the organisation of the curriculum to make it more meaningful to pupils and to include the basic skills of English, mathematics and information and communication technology to be taught through a range of subjects.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, deputy headteacher and members of the governing body have worked together with determination to raise attainment and improve achievement. Despite some setbacks, due to changes in staffing, they have successfully moved the school forward securing a team of staff committed to improving the life chances of pupils in their care. Better systems for monitoring pupils' progress and holding teachers to account are more securely established. The school is now leading its own development, drawing on expertise from the local authority when necessary. Senior leaders and subject leaders have started to monitor performance in their subjects or aspects through scrutiny of planning and pupils' work. However, it is too early to evaluate the impact of this work on pupils' achievement.

The governing body has a clearer understanding of its role than previously and has organised itself to fulfil its duties. The chair of governors meets with the headteacher weekly and other governors help in school. As a result, the governing body has a clear knowledge of the day-to-day running of the school. Three new members have joined the governing body, bringing specific skills and expertise. However, there remain three vacancies, which mean the work of supporting and challenging the school remains with a

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small number of governors. Safeguarding arrangements are good. The site is secure, with systems and procedures for keeping pupils safe known to staff. School arrangements to track attendance are extremely effective, with the attendance coordinator very knowledgeable about each pupil. Promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The school has appropriate policies in place and is starting to track the achievement of all pupils more systematically. Community cohesion is satisfactory and the school is a harmonious community. An action plan is in place and the school recognises that pupils' understanding of other cultures is limited.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

**Views of parents and carers**

Of the number of parental and carer questionnaires returned, the vast majority of parents and carers consider the teaching to be good and that their children are kept safe. Most parents and carers were content with all other aspects of the school's work. A few were unhappy about the manner in which the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors explored this concern very carefully, meeting with four different groups of pupils; scrutinising the results of the pupils' questionnaires; and talking to many individual pupils. It was found that the almost all pupils are clear about the behaviour policy and consider any unacceptable behaviour is dealt with fairly and swiftly. Inspectors found that, although there are examples of good teaching, evidence shows that it is satisfactory overall and improving.



## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ribbleton Avenue Methodist Junior 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 64 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 168 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	28	44	33	52	2	3	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	26	41	35	55	2	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	27	42	30	47	5	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	19	30	38	59	4	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	23	36	38	59	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	22	34	35	55	4	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	24	38	33	52	3	5	1	2
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)	19	30	36	56	4	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	27	41	64	3	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	30	33	52	8	13	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	23	44	69	0	0	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	22	34	36	56	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	42	31	48	5	8	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and 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 2009/10 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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



17 February 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Ribbleton Avenue Methodist Junior School, Preston, PR1 5SN**

I would like to thank you on behalf of the team for the warm welcome you gave us during our recent visit to inspect your school. You were most polite, helpful and courteous. You told us your views about your school and your work enthusiastically.

Your school is satisfactory, with several good features. Here are some of the good things about your school.

- You attend school more and that means you can learn more.
- Your behaviour is good and that has led to you feeling safer in school.
- Adults in school look after you well and make sure nobody gets left behind.
- Teaching has improved; it is never less than satisfactory and it is getting better.

The headteacher, the governing body and the staff have worked hard and successfully to improve your school. They have a clear idea of what is working well and what can improve further. So, we have agreed some important priorities for all the adults to do. I have asked them to:

- provide a curriculum that meets the needs and goals of all pupils
- build on recent improvements in your learning so that achievement is consistently good for all groups of pupils
- improve the quality of teaching and learning, so that activities challenge all of you and your teachers check your progress throughout and use marking to let you know how well you are doing.

You can help by coming to school as often as you can. My best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

Eileen Mulgrew

Her Majesty's Inspector

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