

# Poulton-Le-Sands Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 119538           |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Lancashire       |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 358578           |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 10–11 March 2011 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Stephen Rowland  |

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>                 | 4–11   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 193  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                               |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Mr David Woodhouse                               |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Mrs Victoria Bould                               |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 24 January 2008                                  |
| <b>School address</b>                      | Church Street<br>Morecambe<br>Lancashire LA4 5QA |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01524 413273                                     |
| <b>Fax number</b>                          | 01524 400123                                     |
| <b>Email address</b>                       | email@poulton-le-sands.lancs.sch.uk              |

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|--------------------------|------------------|
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 11 lessons and observed the work of eight teachers. They evaluated the school's work, and looked at relevant policies, the school development plan, records of meetings of the governing body the school's monitoring records and, analyses of pupils' attainment and progress. The 121 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were also analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- The degree to which the school ensures that all pupils, including boys and the more able, achieve their full potential.
- How well the school ensures that challenging and engaging teaching promotes good learning.
- How well assessment information is used to support learning.
- The degree to which leaders and managers at all levels contribute to the school's development and improvement.
- How well the Early Years Foundation Stage secures children's improvements in language skills.

## Information about the school

This is a smaller than average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is close to the national average. Most pupils are of White British heritage and a very small proportion is at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. The school has the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Activemark and the Healthy Schools status.

**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 an ethos of care and support for all pupils and has strong links with families and the wider community. There is a clear sense of shared values. Pupils say they feel safe, and this view is supported by parents and carers. Pupils are respectful and considerate and the school works well as a community where all are valued. Attainment is close to the national average but is improving steadily. Pupils enjoy school and achieve well. Self-evaluation is realistic and accurate if somewhat modest. There have been good improvements to provision over recent years and this has brought about an improving trend in learning and progress. The school has successfully tackled the issues raised at the time of the last inspection. This, along with good and improving outcomes, shows that there is a good capacity for sustained improvement.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is effective and prepares children well for the move to Key Stage 1. Tracking of progress is robust and accessible and teachers are making increasingly effective use of the information provided to plan for good learning. Teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 is good with some outstanding features. Brisk and engaging teaching helps pupils to learn. The focus on providing activities to engage and involve boys has enabled the school to narrow the gap in attainment between the genders. Although teachers generally assess pupils' work and understanding well, some opportunities are missed to ensure that pupils benefit fully from these assessments. Pupils do not always know how well they are doing so as to motivate them further and increase the rate of their progress. Pupils enjoy school and are very loyal. Many positive comments were made by them during the inspection. Pupils particularly appreciate the help their teachers give them and the school's close and caring ethos where all feel safe. As one pupil put it, 'The school is like a family. There is always someone who will listen to you if you have a problem.'

Parents and carers also expressed very positive views about the school. Of the high number of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire many included very positive comments. Typical of these are: 'The school has exceeded our expectation in many areas compared to the previous school.' Another parent or carer wrote, 'We are glad we chose this school because of its caring, community-centred ethos. It helps every child achieve its full potential.'

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further accelerate the rate of pupils' progress and so raise attainment by:
  - ensuring that the intended outcomes of lessons are made consistently clear to pupils so they can check on what they have learned, how well they have done and what they need to do to improve

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- ensuring that there are regular opportunities to consolidate learning and to deal with any misconceptions
- ensuring that pupils have regular opportunities to respond to feedback.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

Pupils enjoy learning and value the engaging and interesting lessons provided for them. This means including the more able, pupils make good progress and their achievement is good. In one successful English lesson, for example, pupils were excited to be challenged to find more powerful adjectives and adverbs to describe a fearful monster.

Pupils enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which are low compared to those expected for their age. They make good progress overall and leave with attainment which is close to the national average. The school's detailed tracking system shows that this improving trend is strengthening and that current pupils are meeting or exceeding the targets set for them. The gap in performance between boys and girls has been successfully tackled. The improving trend in achievement is due to the work the school has done to secure greater consistency in the quality of teaching and its development of a robust system for tracking pupils' progress. Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good and, as a consequence, they make good progress.

Within the caring, Christian ethos of this school pupils say they feel safe. Behaviour is good; all are made to feel welcome and any concerns are dealt with swiftly and sensitively. Many pupils have roles of responsibility such as eco-monitors, playground buddies or members of the school council. As a result pupils feel that they have an active role to play in the management of the school and are proud of what they have achieved. This also enables pupils to develop well the skills, such as team-working and showing initiative, they will need in adult life. Pupils are active in a number of local bodies, including the school's parish church. Attendance has improved steadily and is now above average. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school's distinctive Christian character means that pupils' spiritual awareness and their sense of moral and social responsibility is strong.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| Taking into account:  |          |
| Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>   | 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        |
| <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>2</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b> | <b>2</b> |
| Taking into account:  |          |
| Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>   | 2        |
| <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?

Teaching is good. Lessons are well planned so that all pupils can learn and make good progress. The pace of learning is brisk and there is little chance that pupils will lose interest. Questioning is skilful and all pupils are challenged to think further and deeper about the subject matter of the lesson. In one very effective lesson on time, for example, pupils in Year 2 were completely absorbed by games and puzzles which supported and developed their learning. Lessons are well planned so that appropriate activities are provided for different groups of children. The school's very thorough tracking system has enabled teachers to pick out areas of potential underachievement and to plan to address these.

The use of assessment to support learning is good overall but occasionally the intended outcomes of the lesson and the ways in which pupils can assess their own success in reaching these outcomes are insufficiently clear. This means that pupils are not always sure about how well they have done and what they need to do to improve. At times, teachers do not provide enough time for pupils to reflect on their learning and for misconceptions to be dealt with. Marking is very supportive but pupils do not always have enough time to respond to the feedback they are given so they do not benefit from the good advice they are given.

The school's curriculum is well organised and provides a broad balance of activities to meet the needs of all pupils. Information and communication technology is widely used to

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support pupils' learning and this means that all pupils are skilled users of modern technology. There is a very broad range of enrichment activities including sporting, musical and cultural activities. Many pupils are engaged as eco-monitors and develop an understanding of how to protect scarce resources. Almost all pupils benefit from a residential experience. The curriculum is particularly successful in ensuring the personal development and well-being of pupils.

Support and guidance for pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable and for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is strong. Needs are assessed thoroughly and interventions are planned to address them. Progress is carefully evaluated with parents and carers fully involved in this process. The school can cite a number of telling examples of how the support they have provided has enabled children to feel comfortable and confident in school and to make good progress. In this work it is well supported by a number of external groups and agencies. The school has worked successfully to improve attendance so that it is now above average.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is widely respected within the school and the local community. Under her direction the school has strengthened its caring and supportive ethos and has also successfully raised pupils' academic achievement. She is well supported by her senior staff and by her middle leaders. All staff share a common sense of purpose and direction. There is a growing confidence that the school can continue to improve. Teaching is monitored and evaluated closely and support given where practice needs to improve. The inconsistencies noted at the time of the last inspection have been largely eliminated and almost all teaching is good or better.

The school evaluates its own work well and has realistic plans for further development. All leaders and managers and the governing body actively contribute to this. The school is well served by a committed and experienced governing body who know it well and are not afraid to question and challenge when needed.

The school works closely with parents and carers. Their views are actively sought through regular surveys and questionnaires. Many are active supporters of the school helping with activities such as daily worship. The school has numerous external partnerships which enhance provision and help to deliver good outcomes. These include a range of links which help to ensure good care, guidance and support. There is a close partnership with the local high school, which is a sports specialist college which helps to promote a good understanding of healthy lifestyles. Discrimination of any type is not tolerated at Poulton-

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Le-Sands and the school successfully ensures that all pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed. The arrangements the school has to ensure safeguarding (system to care for and protect pupils) are robust and effective. This includes an appropriate focus on the suitability of staff and on the appointment of new staff. The strategies the school employs to promote community cohesion are effective. This is particularly reflected in the very successful way in which the school functions as a community and how well the school has evaluated the effectiveness of its work in the local community.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>The leadership and management of teaching and learning   | 2        |
| <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>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>  | <b>2</b> |

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage towards the early learning goals. Many children make marked progress in language skills. This is due to the many activities which are provided to develop these skills and by the quality of talk which children have with adults. Children learn to share and to take responsibility for small tasks. They learn to get on well with their peers, how to behave well and how to play safely.

Adults work closely together to observe children at play and to plan for the next steps of learning. They keep accurate and thorough records and ensure that they support individual needs well. They have a good understanding of how to intervene in children's play to move learning on. There is a stimulating learning environment both indoors and out which has a real sense of 'magic and sparkle'. Children enjoy the mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Links with parents and carers are good and there are regular opportunities for them to share their child's achievements outside school.

The setting is well led by the coordinator who is fully supported by a team of early years' specialists. There is a determined focus on continuous improvement to achievement and provision. Formal meetings are held regularly and plans for development are regularly



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under review. All staff are appropriately qualified and trained to support children's welfare and learning.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>                   | <b>2</b> |
| 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 of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2        |

## Views of parents and carers

About 60% of parents and carers responded, which is a much higher return rate than usual for primary schools. A very large majority of responses were entirely positive. All of those who responded felt that the school kept their child safe and that the school helped their child to have a healthy lifestyle. A very small minority of respondents felt that the school did not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors considered the way in which the school deals with unacceptable behaviour through discussion, including with pupils, observations in and around the school and by examining records of incidents. No evidence was found which suggested that the school did not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Poulton-Le-Sands Church of England 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 121 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 193 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements  | Strongly agree |    | Agree |    | Disagree |   | Strongly disagree |   |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
|   | Total          | %  | Total | %  | Total    | % | Total             | % |
| My child enjoys school  | 68             | 56 | 51    | 42 | 2        | 2 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe  | 69             | 57 | 52    | 43 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress  | 53             | 44 | 63    | 52 | 4        | 3 | 0                 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school   | 61             | 50 | 55    | 45 | 5        | 4 | 0                 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school   | 64             | 53 | 55    | 45 | 2        | 2 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning  | 58             | 48 | 59    | 49 | 4        | 3 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle   | 61             | 50 | 60    | 50 | 0        | 0 | 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) | 48             | 40 | 65    | 54 | 2        | 2 | 1                 | 1 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs  | 56             | 46 | 64    | 53 | 1        | 1 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour  | 54             | 45 | 55    | 45 | 10       | 8 | 1                 | 1 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns   | 51             | 42 | 64    | 53 | 5        | 4 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively   | 60             | 50 | 58    | 48 | 1        | 1 | 0                 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school   | 68             | 56 | 48    | 40 | 3        | 2 | 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.**



14 March 2011

Dear Pupils,

**Inspection of Poulton-Le-Sands Church of England Primary School, Morecambe, LA4 5QA**

Thank you for making the inspection team so welcome during our recent visit to your school. We were particularly grateful to those of you who agreed to meet us during your lunchtime. Thank you also to those of you who completed the questionnaire.

Poulton-Le-Sands is a good school. There are lots of good features and the staff work very hard to make it even better. We were very impressed by your behaviour and how you all try so hard to make sure everyone is happy and looked after. We were particularly impressed by how many responsibilities, such as prefects and eco-monitors, you take on to help the school run smoothly.

You make good progress and your teachers provide you with good lessons. You also have many opportunities to learn outside school, for example, on the residential trips. However, we thought that there are some things which would help you to learn even more. We felt that the learning objectives you are given at the beginning of some lessons should be made clearer so that you know exactly what the lesson will be about. Also we thought that at times it would help to pause to make sure everyone has understood. Your teachers' marking is very thorough but they should check more often to see if you understand their advice.

We know you are very proud of your school. Please try to help your teachers by always behaving as well as you did during our visit, by trying your very best and by helping each other. Once again, thank you for your kindness and help.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Rowland

Lead inspector

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