

Walsden St Peters CofE VC Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135862
Local Authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	360769
Inspection dates	5–6 April 2011
Reporting inspector	Steven Hill

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	132
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Helen Wilson
Headteacher	Mr Peter Stevenson
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Rochdale Road Walsden, Todmorden West Yorkshire OL14 6RN
Telephone number	01706 812947
Fax number	01706 819285
Email address	office@walsden.calderdale.sch.uk

Inspection number 360769

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed nine lessons taught by six different teachers. Meetings were held with staff, groups of pupils and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked a range of documentation, particularly that relating to the safeguarding of pupils and tracking their progress. Samples of pupils' work were examined and questionnaires analysed from staff, pupils, and from 53 parents and carers.

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

- What the school's tracking data showed about recent progress and attainment by the end of Year 6.
- Teachers' use of assessment, especially in matching work to pupils' varying needs.
- Whether the ways in which the school provides for individuals who have problems justifies its assessment of care, guidance and support as being outstanding.

Information about the school

This smaller-than-average size primary school, in a village on the edge of the Pennines, opened in September 2009. It is an amalgamation of the infant and junior schools which previously operated on the site. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage, with a few from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. No pupil speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is a little below average, but the percentage of these pupils with high levels of need is above average. This is the school's first 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

The school has quickly become a single, cohesive unit since the amalgamation and provides a good education for all of its pupils. All pupils achieve well because of good teaching and an engaging curriculum. Children's skills when they enter school are broadly in line with the expectations for their age. They achieve exceptionally well in the Reception class, preparing them very effectively for the rest of their school career. They make good progress throughout Key Stages 1 and 2. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is above average in mathematics, and well above average in English. Senior staff and the governing body have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and successfully tackle any issues that arise from the good self-evaluation. This good management, combined with the strong sense of teamwork in the school, and a positive track record of improvement, shows that it has a good capacity for sustained improvement.

The school's care, guidance and support for pupils are outstanding. These greatly support the many positive aspects of pupils' personal development, and their excellent behaviour. In particular, there is carefully tailored, high-quality support provided to pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. This is very successful in helping them to be fully included in the life of the school, and to make good progress. Pupils' own very good relationships, and the way they are keen to care for and help each other, contribute substantially to the harmonious, positive ethos of the school. Pupils were clear in discussion that they felt safe in school because they could rely on all the adults, and on the other children, to support them if they had problems.

The effective curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of interesting activities that engage their interest, and that they greatly enjoy. There are some good links made between subjects, especially in using pupils' mathematics and English skills to enhance their learning in other subjects. However, there are inconsistencies in how well and how often they are able to use their skills in information and communication technology (ICT) to support progress across the curriculum.

A key strength in teaching is how well teachers use assessment information to match work to the different starting points of pupils. This ensures that they are all given tasks that are challenging but manageable. In some lessons, teachers use a good range of strategies to involve everyone actively when the whole class works together. These include getting pupils to discuss issues in pairs and sort out their ideas, or writing their ideas on small whiteboards so the teacher can see everyone's answers. However, at other times, teachers miss opportunities to use such strategies. There are also some inconsistencies in how well teachers mark pupils' work.

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on the current good standard of teaching by ensuring that:
 - teachers make more frequent use of strategies to involve all pupils actively in their learning in whole-class sessions, and to keep track of their understanding
 - the marking of pupils' work is more consistent, particularly in showing pupils how they can improve in the future.
- Consolidate and improve pupils' skills in information and communication technology by:
 - ensuring that pupils have more frequent opportunities to use their information and communication technology skills across the curriculum and that such opportunities are taken consistently
 - devising a school-wide plan to ensure that there is balance in how the different aspects of information and communication technology are used in different subjects.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils greatly enjoy school and the school's tracking system shows they make good progress regardless of background or gender. This was confirmed by the consistently good progress observed in lessons. A group of Year 6 pupils agreed that, 'All lessons are interesting and fun.' In a mathematics lesson in Year 2, pupils enthusiastically joined in counting in fives and tens, before tackling individual work that was tightly-matched to their different needs. They made good progress in their understanding of multiplication in relation to repeated addition, and showed a good understanding of place value. Pupils in Year 6 concentrated extremely well as they used a variety of prepositions to enhance their writing of a paragraph for an adventure story. They settled quickly to work and behaved exceptionally well, as they improved their understanding of how to improve their work in response to the adults' challenging questions. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because tasks are consistently matched to their individual needs. Teaching assistants who work with individuals in class give a well-judged mix of support and challenge so that pupils are encouraged to improve their work, as well as being given good support to help them with this. As a result, they achieve well in light of their starting points. In groups withdrawn from lessons, work is carefully-tailored to pupils' individual needs. For example, four pupils from Year 3 made good progress in developing their English skills when working on a carefully-structured programme based around an exciting adventure story.

Pupils develop a good understanding of right and wrong, and discuss important issues thoughtfully. They have good collaborative skills, working effectively together in groups when required. They are keen to learn about other cultures, and pupils in Year 2 greatly enjoyed learning about life in Japan, for example. Pupils make a good contribution to the community as a result of the support they provide to each other, through the school council, for example. They are involved well in events in the village and in the wider area. All pupils get on extremely well together. A group of pupils from Year 6 agreed that, 'Everyone's kind and friendly.' Pupils' take their social responsibilities very seriously, exemplified by how keen Year 6 pupils are to help their 'buddies' in the Reception class,

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

one saying, 'I love doing that!' They show a genuine affection for these younger children, and regard helping them as a treat, rather than a job. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles, and greatly enjoy sport, and the success they have in local competitions. Their attendance is average and they are punctual. Their positive attitudes to work, good social skills and above-average attainment prepare them well for their future lives.

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	2
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	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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

¹ 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 and learning are good throughout the school. Routines are well-established so lessons are orderly. Teachers often make good use of humour to engage pupils, who respond positively to their teachers' enthusiasm. Teachers mark work regularly and show pupils clearly what they have done well, and where they have gone wrong, but do not always make clear to them how to improve in future. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to clarify and illustrate their explanations, evident when pupils in Years 4 and 5 watched videos of Greek theatres to help them understand aspects of ancient drama.

The wide-ranging curriculum benefits from a great variety of enrichment activities, such as themed weeks, visits out and visitors into school. Collaboration with a visiting artist, for example, led to some high-quality work that is on display in the school. Some very good links are made between different subjects. For example, in an excellent lesson in Year 3,

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

pupils developed their writing and collaborative skills, as well as their understanding of drama and road safety, when they wrote and acted out instructions for crossing the road. However, ICT links to other subjects are more variable, in that they are made by individual teachers rather than being driven by an overarching plan or audit to ensure that the different aspects of ICT all receive adequate emphasis in different subjects.

Outstanding care, guidance and support mean that pupils feel safe and happy in the school. A consistent approach to managing behaviour, continual reinforcement of positive values and excellent relationships lead to pupils' outstanding behaviour, and positive attitudes to each other and to learning. The school has good procedures to promote attendance. Most pupils' attendance is good. However, in this small school the persistent absence of the very few pupils who have medical or family difficulties has a disproportionate effect on overall attendance figures. As a result, attendance is average overall.

Pupils who have particular difficulties, such as physical impairment, emotional or behavioural issues, or who have personal family problems, are helped particularly well, so that their well-being and achievement are given equal support. The school makes good use of a wide range of external provision, such as the school nurse or the family support worker, to back up the staff's own excellent knowledge of children and their families. The school works effectively to involve parents and carers in ensuring that all pupils are happy and settled in school.

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?

Clear educational direction from the headteacher and governing body has led staff to become a coherent and effective team, who work together well to drive improvements in pupils' learning. Monitoring of pupils' work and of lessons by leaders clearly identifies strengths and areas needing development, so staff are given effective guidance to help them improve their practice. A new, ICT-based system to track pupils' achievement is helping to direct specific help to pupils who need it. This strongly supports the school's good promotion of equal opportunities, so that all groups make similarly good progress.

Governance is good. The governing body has a clear understanding of the school's performance, and holds it to account effectively. Parents and carers are given good information about their children's learning, and the school actively seeks their views, modifying practice in the light of what is learned. Other partnerships make a good contribution to pupils' well-being, and also to the development of the curriculum. The

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

sports partnership, for example, has extended the range of activities on offer, as well as boosting the school's involvement in competitions with other schools.

Safeguarding is good, and is given a high priority, with the school continually working to improve and refine its systems, drawing on expert advice from the local authority. The school itself is an outstandingly cohesive and harmonious community, and its work in the local area is of good quality, with pupils involved in a variety of activities in the village, and in the nearby town of Todmorden. Good links with other schools are mutually beneficial, such as the greatly enjoyed 'Greek feast', in full costume, that was shared at another local primary school. The school has good links with another school with a much more diverse intake, but links with communities beyond the United Kingdom have proved difficult to sustain.

These are the grades for 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	2
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 outstanding progress in the Reception class because of high-quality teaching and an exciting curriculum. A very good balance is kept between activities directed by adults, and those chosen by children. The adults are particularly skilled at intervening in children's play to help them extend their understanding, and to develop their vocabulary. Excellent use is made of the outdoor area to develop different aspects of learning. During the inspection, children made great progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world, as well as their social skills; they thoroughly enjoyed investigating water, 'painting' various structures outdoors with coloured water, experimenting together with pouring water down different tubes or chutes, blowing bubbles, or energetically scrubbing floors with soapy water. Equally, an outstanding, tightly-structured session indoors ensured that a group of children made excellent progress in understanding how the letters in words relate to the sounds they make. The

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

class is extremely well-managed and organised. Assessment systems are thorough and used very effectively to match activities to children's needs and interests. Very good induction procedures, and positive links with parents and carers, contribute to children settling very happily and securely into school.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

The response of parents and carers to the questionnaire shows that they are overwhelmingly positive about what the school offers their children. They particularly value that their children are safe and happy in school, and that the teaching is good. Inspection evidence endorses these positive views. Many parents and carers wrote positive comments. Typical was one which said, 'Walsden is a lovely school. It has a friendly and welcoming atmosphere, and kind caring staff.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Walsden St Peters CofE VC 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 53 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 132 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	46	87	7	13	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	48	91	5	9	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	41	77	11	21	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	75	12	23	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	43	81	10	19	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	42	79	10	19	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	36	68	17	32	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)	37	70	11	21	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	36	68	15	28	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	32	60	19	36	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	62	17	32	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	43	81	9	17	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	44	83	9	17	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	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).

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">■ 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.



7 April 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Walsden St Peters C of E VC Primary School, Todmorden, OL14 6RN

Thank you for your cheerful welcome when we inspected your school. You told us that you liked school and said that you think you are learning a lot. You are right.

Your school is giving you a good education. The children in the Reception class do particularly well. By the end of your time in school, your attainment is better than in most other schools, especially in English. You make good progress because your teachers and the other adults are skilled at helping you to learn. The teachers are particularly good at making sure that the work you do is just right for you. We have asked them to help you learn even more by always pointing out, when they mark your books, how you can do better next time. We have also suggested they make more use of ways of keeping you all actively involved, such as talking about your work together.

You have lots of interesting things to do so that you enjoy your lessons. The teachers are particularly good at connecting different subjects together to give you a better understanding of what you learn. We have asked them to make even more use of ICT in your lessons to do this. The school is very good at looking after everyone, and they are helping you to grow up into sensible, caring and hard-working young people. We were particularly impressed by your excellent behaviour, and by how well you all get along together, and look after each other.

The adults are good at organising the school and are keen to make it even better. You can help by keeping up your hard work and behaving so well, and by taking careful note of what teachers write in your books.

Yours sincerely,

Steven Hill

Lead Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.