

Kirkham St Michael's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 119550 |
| Local Authority | Lancashire |
| Inspection number | 358580 |
| Inspection dates | 24–25 March 2011 |
| Reporting inspector | Marie Cordey |

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

| | |
|--|---|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 5–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 197 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mrs Helen Hockenhull |
| Headteacher | Ms Margaret Long |
| Date of previous school inspection | 12 February 2008 |
| School address | School Lane Kirkham, Preston Lancashire PR4 2SL |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 13 lessons and observed eight teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including the school's self-evaluation evidence, the school improvement plan, safeguarding documentation, and internal and external monitoring of the school. The inspectors scrutinised 81 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, and those returned by pupils and staff.

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

- The effectiveness of teaching, assessment to support learning and the curriculum to raise pupils' attainment, especially in writing and for boys.
- The effectiveness of outdoor provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The contribution of leaders to raising attainment and improving achievement, the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than the average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and very few are from minority ethnic groups. The school has achieved Healthy School status and the Activemark for its sports provision. There has been significant staffing instability at all levels over the past few years. The headteacher has been in post for two years and three months and the deputy headteacher has been in post since January 2011. An additional temporary deputy headteacher, appointed by the local authority to strengthen the senior management, has been in post since February. An after-school club, located at the school, is managed and run by a private provider and was not part of this inspection.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than, in all the circumstances, it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the quality of teaching and the use of assessment to support learning so that pupils achieve their potential.

Under the effective leadership of the headteacher, many changes have been made to the curriculum and the quality of teaching and learning has been improved. While the impact of teaching over time is still inadequate as is the progress the pupils make; in lessons observed during the inspection, teaching and progress were satisfactory overall. These improvements are beginning to raise attainment and improve achievement. However, these measures have not yet had enough time to be fully successful in ensuring that all pupils make the progress that they should or that tasks are matched closely enough to their different needs and abilities. Staff turbulence has diminished because of the impact of the actions taken by the leadership team to improve the school. This has contributed to a lack of continuity in some pupils' work as well as some gaps in their learning. At the time of the inspection, the staffing situation was more stable although there are still some staff on temporary contracts.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress but there has been a history of underachievement for pupils by the time they leave school at the end of Year 6. This is being systematically eliminated and in some classes pupils' achievement is satisfactory, but overall progress is not fast enough to enable pupils to catch up on previous gaps in their learning. By Year 6, attainment is average overall, although it is relatively weaker in writing and mathematics. In particular, pupils are not able to apply their mathematical skills in problem solving and investigation. The opportunities for pupils to write at greater length have not been systematically developed.

Pupils' personal development is largely satisfactory and their adoption of healthy lifestyles is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is in line with the national average. Pupils are courteous and welcoming and their behaviour is satisfactory. Their sense of spirituality is well-developed through the school's Christian values.

Previous weaknesses in teaching have been resolved as a result of the headteacher's focus upon improving teaching and learning. However, over time the impact of teaching on pupils' learning has been inadequate. Although there is a higher proportion of good teaching in the school, leaders are aware that it is not yet sufficient to counteract underachievement. In some instances, pupils have insufficient opportunity to work independently and develop self-reliance because expectations of their performance are

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low. Opportunities are sometimes missed to improve pupils' basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum.

Senior leaders and members of the governing body have clearly and accurately identified the right areas for improvement and are now tackling them quickly. Good plans have been put into place and are being carried through with increasing success, as seen for example in the improvements made to the quality of teaching and learning. Staff are clearly committed to the plans and there is an unequivocal and determined vision to improve the school's performance. Satisfactory leadership and management skills have led to improved teaching quality, improving attainment and better progress in lessons currently. This demonstrates a satisfactory capacity to sustain further improvement. The leaders are maintaining a clear on these changes to ensure that improvements continue and underachievement is eradicated.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment and achievement in all subjects, particularly in writing and mathematics by:
 - providing more challenging work, especially for more-able pupils
 - improving pupils' application of mathematical skills to problem solving and investigational work
 - encouraging pupils to write at greater length
 - ensuring that planning is focused on improving basic skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT across the curriculum.
- Improve the quality of teaching to accelerate pupils' progress so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - ensuring greater consistency of challenge and aspiration across the school
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to work independently and to become more self-reliant
 - ensuring that work planned is carefully matched to the abilities and interests of all pupils and takes account of their previous learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Children's starting points vary when they join the Reception class but overall are in line with age-related expectations. By the time pupils enter Year 1, the skills of the majority are above average and satisfactory learning in Key Stage 1, results in above average attainment by the end of Year 2. In Key Stage 2, pupils' progress is inconsistent and has been very slow in Years 3 and 4. It is beginning to improve but pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, do not reach the levels of which they are capable by the end of Year 6; consequently, their achievement is inadequate. As a result, attainment is average rather than above average by the time pupils leave the school. Pupils make most progress when teachers' planning is clearly matched to their interests and capabilities and they are challenged to produce their best possible work. In one lesson, for instance, pupils were eager to compose poems to reflect their knowledge about nature because of stimulating photographs, the high expectations of both teacher

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and teaching assistant and well-planned activities. Pupils relished learning because they used their experiences and knowledge of gardening, visiting parks and growing their own plants to inspire their writing. When pupils are very clear about what is required of them, their learning accelerates.

Pupils enjoy plenty of sport and are keen advocates of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. They are proud of the opportunities to take on responsibilities such as being members of the School Council and the Eco Committee. The school has accurately identified the need to broaden pupils' experiences of communities other than their own. Pupils' social development is characterised by their courtesy and politeness when welcoming visitors.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 4 |
| Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹ | 3 |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 4 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress | 4 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 3 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 3 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 3 |
| The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 3 |
| Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹ | 3 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 3 |

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?

There is some good teaching in the school and pupils make better progress in these lessons. The proportion of teaching that is good is not sufficient, however, to enable pupils to catch up on previous underachievement. The better teaching is characterised by good planning to engage the interests and abilities of pupils. It challenges and involves the pupils because of teachers' high aspirations and planning that builds on pupils' prior learning. Work is marked regularly so that pupils understand how they are doing, as well as how to make their work better. However, the majority of lessons are not so well-planned and an examination of pupils' books confirms their frequently limited progress.

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Recent action means that pupils are becoming more involved in assessing their own work but this is at a very early stage. Too many pupils are not clear about how they are doing in their work or what to do in order to make it better. Although teachers have increasingly accurate information about how well pupils are doing, they do not make full use of it when planning activities to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. Teaching assistants are effective in lessons where they are directed to support the learning of clearly identified individuals or small groups. They are less effective when the teacher is introducing the learning for the lesson or, in some cases, when they teach small groups of pupils who are withdrawn from lessons.

The curriculum is satisfactory. The increasing emphasis on matching subjects to pupils' interests is making the curriculum more enjoyable and is also beginning to help improve pupils' learning. A broad range of enrichment activities is welcomed by pupils and their parents and carers. Visiting music teachers and sports coaches make a positive contribution to improving pupils' skills and stimulating their enthusiasm. The community takes advantage of the after-school club located at the school.

The provision for the personal development of pupils whose circumstances have made them vulnerable is a strength of the school. They are well cared for and encouraged to develop their personalities and confidence. Systems to promote attendance and the safeguarding of pupils are satisfactory.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 4 |
| Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 4 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 3 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 3 |

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers are driving and securing improvement appropriately as evidenced in the increasing proportion of good teaching and learning observed during the inspection. They have clearly identified and acted upon areas for improvement and are acutely aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their actions have had a positive impact but leaders know there is still more work to be done. Leaders make increasingly effective use of the school's improved tracking systems to improve transition between classes and key stages. Challenging targets for pupils' achievement have been set and replace unambitious targets previously established. The quality of teaching and learning has improved because of the effectiveness of the school's rigorous monitoring systems.

The governing body is holding the school to account more; it is involved in training and in the school's work. The governing body ensures that the safeguarding of pupils and staff meets requirements. The school works effectively to tackle discrimination and pupils respect people from different walks of life. The school's promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory and the core school value of respect for others underpins its

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effective promotion of a cohesive school community. However, it is more limited in developing pupils' understanding of other cultures in the local and international community.

These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 3 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers | 3 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 3 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 4 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good induction arrangements prepare children well for their first year of school. They make good progress and their skills in most areas of learning are above age-related expectations by the time they leave the Reception class. Children make good progress in their personal development because they are well looked after and feel safe in the nurturing atmosphere of the setting. The quality of teaching is good overall; it stimulates children's curiosity and makes them more confident and self-reliant. Children enjoy playing together cooperatively, particularly when they learn indoors. However, opportunities for children to develop their independence and practise their writing skills by playing and learning outdoors are limited because staff miss opportunities to promote such learning here. Satisfactory teaching in the outdoor area reflects the planning of many activities to engage children's interest. Children's knowledge and use of day-to-day routines is mixed and therefore they are sometimes not sure what to do and become less cooperative with each other. The new Early Years teacher and leader have begun planning to improve and extend outdoor learning. Staff are jointly planning the provision of good quality play and learning both indoors and outdoors.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
| 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 | 3 |

Views of parents and carers

Over one third of parents and carers completed questionnaires. Of these, the majority are happy with the school's provision and indicated that their children enjoyed school. These parents and carers also agreed that the school helped their children to have a healthy lifestyle. A small minority of parents and carers felt that unacceptable behaviour was not dealt with effectively. However, the inspection evidence indicates that the school's procedures for managing behaviour are satisfactory. A very small number of parents and carers had concerns about their children's progress and almost a quarter made written comments about disruptions to their children's learning because of changes in staffing. The inspection evidence confirms these views. Overall, pupils do not make sufficient progress and there is a lack of continuity in a minority of pupils' books. As reported above, the school has begun to tackle these concerns.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Kirkham St Michael's 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 81 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 197 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 47 | 58 | 32 | 40 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 54 | 67 | 26 | 32 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress | 34 | 42 | 44 | 54 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 37 | 46 | 38 | 47 | 6 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 40 | 49 | 37 | 46 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 37 | 46 | 38 | 47 | 5 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 38 | 47 | 41 | 51 | 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) | 30 | 37 | 41 | 51 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 30 | 37 | 49 | 60 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 28 | 35 | 38 | 47 | 9 | 11 | 1 | 1 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 25 | 31 | 46 | 57 | 6 | 7 | 2 | 2 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 35 | 43 | 39 | 48 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 42 | 52 | 33 | 41 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 1 |

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.



28 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kirkham St Michael's Church of England Primary School, Preston, PR4 2SL

Thank you for making us so welcome when we inspected your school recently. We would particularly like to thank the pupils who met with two of the inspectors and the pupils who gave us such an interesting and informative tour of the school. You were all very polite and welcoming. The school has helped you to be thoughtful and responsible. Well done on the jobs you do in school!

Your school encourages you to think of others and to value yourselves. You enjoy sport and were very persuasive when you told us about living healthy lifestyles. Thank you. The standard of your work is average and it is improving. Children in the Early Years Foundation make good progress.

Although many aspects of your school are satisfactory, it is not good enough overall. This is because the school has not always helped you to make enough progress in your work, especially those of you in Key Stage 2. Although there have been recent improvements, your lessons have not been good enough to ensure you make fast enough progress to reach the levels of which you are capable. We have therefore asked the school to build upon the improvements it has already made to the teaching that you receive and help you to practise and increase your knowledge and understanding in many subjects. The school has been given a 'notice to improve', which means inspectors will visit again in the future to check on its progress.

We hope you all continue to work hard and help the school leaders and teachers to improve the school. You all have our very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Marie Cordey

Lead inspector

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